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Essays

By

Leigh Hunt

With Biographical Introduction

by

Hannaford Bennett



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Biographical Introduction

his ancestry Leigh Hunt, in his delightful *Autobiography*, states that on the mother's side they were "all sailors and rough subjects without mitigation of Quakerism, as, on the father's side, they were all creoles and claret drinkers, & yet polite and clerical." Isaac Hunt, the author, was a native of Barbadoes, and was the son, grandson and great-grandson of successive Rgymen of the English church of the colony. His wife, Mary Sewell, was born in Philadelphia, but, like her husband, was of English descent. When the American War of Independence broke out Isaac Hunt was practising as a lawyer in Philadelphia, but his zeal for the British cause brought him into collision with his compatriots, & he was compelled to flee to England for safety. The British Government granted him

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a Loyalist pension of one hundred pounds a year; and he forsook the Law for the Church, the occupation for which he was first intended. Hunt was ordained by the Bishop of London and given charge of Bentinck Chapel, Paddington; but he passed from Anglican orthodoxy to Unitarianism, and finally to Universalism. His convivial habits and his incorrigible propensity for getting into debt brought him at length to bankruptcy; and the earliest recollections of James Henry Leigh Hunt, the essayist, who was born on the 19th of October 1784, and was the youngest of a large family, were associated with the King's Bench Prison, in which his father was placed for debt.

Leigh Hunt was educated, like Coleridge and Lamb, at Christ's Hospital School. A quiet, studious, retiring boy with little inclination for physical exercise, his school career was marked chiefly by his fondness for reading and his steady refusal to fag for the elder boys. His constant companions were Tooke's *Pantheon*, Lemprière's *Classical Dictionary*, the great folio edition of

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nce's *Polymetis*, and, in particular, Cooke's Penny edition of the poets. Before he left the school the boy rose to be deputy-Grecian, but he did not obtain the highest honour, for, like Lamb, suffered from a slight stammer, which prevented him, as it had prevented Lamb, from taking part in the "public oration" which it was the privilege of the head boy to deliver. His recollections of Christ's Hospital School, notwithstanding the tyranny of the master, of which both Coleridge and Lamb have left unsavoury pictures, were full of kindly sentiments. "I am grateful to Christ's Hospital," he wrote, "for having bred me up in old cloisters, for its having made me acquainted with the languages Homer and Ovid, and for its having secured to me on the whole a well-trained and cheerful hood. It pressed no superstition upon me. It did not hinder my growing mind from making frequent excursions it pleased into the wide and airy regions of general literature." For some time after his school days Hunt haunted bookstalls and wrote verses. He did not go

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to Oxford or Cambridge, and his temperament unfitted him for any sort of business or profession. Throughout his life, indeed, he showed an inability to grasp the elementary basis of accounts or the value of money, and Dickens has satirised his particular failings in Horace Skimpole in *Bleak House*.

Leigh Hunt's early verses were written in imitation of his beloved poets. As he explains, he wrote "odes" because Collins and Gray had written them, "pastorals" because Pope had written them, "blank verse" because Akenside and Thomson had written blank verse, and a *Palace of Pleasure* because Spencer had written a *Bower of Bliss*. The elder Hunt, proud of his son's achievements, collected the poems and published them by subscription under the title of *Juvenilia*. Thus the boy was a full-blown author in his eighteenth year, and his volume, which bore a portrait of the author, was sufficiently well received to pass into a second edition. About this time England was being threatened by a Napoleonic invasion, and Hunt joined the

volunteers. In his corps were three well-known actors, who awakened in him a nascent interest in the theatre, and he wrote a tragedy, a comedy and a farce; but many years passed before any of his plays were performed. His first essays in prose writing were contributed to the *Traveller* (which was afterwards merged in the *Globe*) under the signature of "Mr Town Junior, Critic and Censor-General," and his payment consisted of a few free copies of the paper. After a while he wrote dramatic criticism for his brother's paper, the *News*, the keynote of his work being its honesty and independence. "To know an actor personally appeared to me," he wrote, "a vice not to be thought of; and I would as lief have taken poison as accepted a ticket from the theatres." In 1808 he joined his brother, John Hunt, in starting the *Examiner*. The motto of the paper was taken from Swift: "Party is the madness of many and the gain of a few." Leigh Hunt became the editor at the age of twenty-three, and conducted it as a critical and political journal for fourteen years. During this

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period the *Examiner* endured every species of good and bad fortune, and eventually the bad overshadowed the good and the paper ceased to exist. But in its early years it was a great power. It attacked the Government for their conduct of the war, and its onslaughts were met by Government prosecutions for libel. Three prosecutions were entered upon and abandoned before a conviction was secured. The *Morning Post* published a fulsome article describing the Prince Regent as "the Mæcenas of the age," and an "Adonis in loveliness," and the *Examiner* replied that this "'Adonis in loveliness' was a corpulent man of fifty . . . was a violator of his word, a libertine over head and ears in disgrace, a despiser of domestic ties, the companion of gamblers and demi-reps." Leigh Hunt and his brother, the publisher, were found guilty of libel, and sentenced to two years' imprisonment and fined five hundred pounds each; but they were told that if they would abstain from personal attacks on the Prince Regent the sentence would be remitted. They declined to make

tions, and were incarcerated for the entire in separate prisons.

gh Hunt edited the *Examiner* during his sonment, and the monotony was still er lightened by visits from Charles Lamb, las Moore, Byron, Brougham, Hazlitt, ey, and other friends. His wife and y shared his captivity, and there is a deul picture of the transformation that he ed in his prison home. The walls were ed with a trellis of roses, the ceiling was ed with clouds and sky, the barred windows screened with Venetian blinds; and when ookcases were set up, and a piano and rs introduced "there was not a handsomer on that side of the water."

r some years subsequent to his release Hunt lived in London busily employed in ry work. Besides his writings for the *Examiner* he made translations from the n, published more verses, and contributed ries of papers, containing perhaps his best , which were issued weekly under the name

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of the *Indicator*. Lamb wrote of him and the essays:—

“ Wit, poet, prose-man, party-man, translator,
Hunt thy best title yet is *Indicator*.”

Hunt's friendship for Shelley led him in 1822 to accept Shelley's solicitation to join Byron and himself in Italy in the issue of a new Liberal quarterly. Hunt reached Italy after a protracted voyage, and for some time lived in dependence on Byron. In the first number of the *Liberal* Byron's *Vision of Judgment* appeared and John Hunt, the publisher, was fined for libel. But the tragic death of Shelley brought the career of the *Liberal* to a close after the issue of four numbers; and Leigh Hunt returned to London feeling himself aggrieved against Byron. Shortly afterwards he wrote a book on *Lord Byron and some of his Contemporaries*, which he afterwards regretted as being ill-natured and unnecessary.

Such were the main facts of Leigh Hunt's life. The remaining thirty-four years were occupied in multitudinous labour as a literary

away from the turmoil of public affairs. Wrote for the *Edinburgh*, *Fraser's*, *Household* and the *Spectator* among other papers, issued many books, including his *Poetical* (1844), *Imagination and Fancy* (1844), *and Humour* (1846), *Men, Women and* (1847), *In Town* (1848), *The Religion of* *Art* (1853), and his *Autobiography* (1850).

4 Sir Percy Shelley, the son of the poet, died him with one hundred and twenty £ a year, and in 1847 the Government paid him a literary pension of two hundred £ a year. On the 28th of August 1859, two months of completing his seventy-year, he passed quietly away, and was buried in Kensal Green Cemetery. His monument bears the line from his own poem, *Abou Dhem* :—

"Write me as one who loved his fellow men."

HANNAFORD BENNETT

Essays by Leigh Hunt

THE EAST-WIND

DID anybody ever hear of the East-Wind when he was a boy? We remember no such thing. We never heard a word about it, all the time we were at school. There was the schoolmaster with his *ferula*, but there was no East-Wind. Our elders might have talked about it, but such calamities of theirs are inaudible in the ears of the juvenile. A fine day was a fine day, let the wind be in what quarter it might. While writing this article, we hear everybody complaining, that the fine weather is polluted by the presence of the East-Wind. It has lasted so long as to force itself upon people's attention. The ladies confess their exasperation with it, for making free without being agreeable; and as ladies' quarrels are to be taken up, and there is no other way of grappling with this invisible enemy, we have put ourselves in a state of Editorial resentment, and have resolved to write an article against it.

The winds are among the most mysterious of the operations of the elements. We know not whence

they come, or whither they go—how they spring up, or how fall—why they prevail so long, after such and such a fashion, in certain quarters; nor, above all, why some of them should be at once so lasting and apparently so pernicious. We know some of their uses; but there is a great deal about them we do not know, and it is difficult to put them to the question. As the sailor said of the ghosts, “we do not understand their tackle.” What is very curious is, there seems to be one of them which prevails in some particular quarter, and has a character for malignity. In the South there is the *Scirocco*, an ugly customer, dark, close, suffocating, making melancholy; which blots the sky, and dejects the spirits of the most lively. In the Oriental parts of the earth, there is the Tifoon, supposed by some to be the Typhon, or Evil Principle of the ancients; and in Europe we have the East-Wind, whom the ancients reckoned among the Sons of Typhon. The winds, Mr Keightley tells us, were divided by the Greeks into *wholesome* and *noxious*; the former of which, Boreas (North-Wind), Zephyrus (West-Wind), and Notus (South-Wind), were, according to Hesiod, the children of Astraeus (*Starry*) and Eos (*Dawn*). The other winds, he says (probably meaning only those who blow from the East), are the race of Typhoeus, whom he describes as the last and most terrible child of earth. In Greece, as over the rest of Europe, the East-Wind was pernicious.

England, the East-Wind is accounted pernicious if it last long; and it is calculated, we believe, it blows during three parts even of our fine weather. We have known a single blast of it to a long row of plants in a greenhouse. Its effects upon the vegetable creation are sure to be deleterious if it last any time; and it puts invalids into a very unpleasant state, by drying the pores of the skin and thus giving activity to those numerous nervous disorders, of which none are more painful than what the moderns call nervousness, and our fathers understood by the name of the Vapours or "Spleen," which, as Shenstone observed, is "little else than obstructed perspiration. A noble poet exclaimed—

'Scarce in a showerless day the heavens indulge
Our melting clime, except the baleful East
Withers the tender spring, and sourly checks
The fancy of the year. Our fathers talk'd
Of summers, balmy airs, and skies serene :
Good Heaven ! for what unexpiated crimes
This dismal change?" —

is a terrible question we shall answer presently. At present, the suffering poet may be allowed to say, he has been a little irritated. It is certainly propitious to have this invisible enemy invading a great nation at his will, and sending among us, week after week, his impertinent and cutting incisions, drying up our skins, blowing dust in our

eyes, contradicting our sunshine, smoking our suburbs, behaving boisterously to our women, aggravating our scolds, withering up our old gentlemen and ladies, nullifying the respite from smoke at Bow, perplexing our rooms between hot and cold, closing up our windows, exasperating our rheumatisms, basely treating the wounds of our old soldiers, spoiling our gardens, preventing our voyages, assisting thereby our Bow Street runners, hurting our tempers, increasing our melancholies, deteriorating our night-airs, showing our wives' ankles, disordering our little children, not being good for our beasts, perplexing our pantaloons (to know which to put on), deranging our ringlets, scarifying our eyes, thinning our apple-tarts, endangering our dances, getting damned our weather-cocks, barbarising our creditors, incapacitating our debtors, obstructing all moist processes in the arts, hindering our astronomers,¹ tiring our editors, and endangering our sales.

The poet asks what crimes could have brought upon us the evils of our climate? He should ask the schoolboy that runs about, the gipsy who laughs at the climate, or the ghost of some old English yeoman, before taxes and sedentary living abounded. An East-Wind, like every other evil, except folly and ill intention, is found, when properly

¹ During East-Winds astronomers are unable to pursue their observations, on account of a certain hazy motion in the air.

grappled with, to be not only no evil, but a good, at least a negative one, sometimes a positive; and even folly and ill intention are but the mistakes of a community in its progress from bad to good. How evil comes at all, we cannot say. It suffices us to believe, that it is in its nature fugitive; and that is the nature of good, when good returns, to outlast it beyond all calculation. If we led the natural lives to which we hope and believe that the advance of knowledge and comfort will bring us round, we should feel the East-Wind as little as the gipsies do: it would be the same refreshment to us that it is to the glowing schoolboy, after his exercise; and as to nipping our fruits and flowers, some living creature makes a dish of them, if we do not. With these considerations, we should be well content to recognise the *concordia discors* that harmonises the inanimate creation. If it were not for the East-Wind in this country, we should probably have too much wet. Our winters would not dry up; our June fields would be impassable: we should not be able to enjoy the West-Wind itself, the Zephyr with its lap full of flowers. And upon the supposition that there is no peril in the East-Wind that may not ultimately be nullified, we need not trouble ourselves with the question, why the danger of excessive moisture must be counteracted by a wind full of dryness. All the excesses of the elements will one day be pastime, for the healthy arms and discerning faculties of discovering man.

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!And so we finish our vituperations in the way in which such things ought generally to be finished, with a discovery that the fault objected to is in ourselves, and renewed admiration of the abundance of promise in all the works of nature.

AUTUMNAL COMMENCEMENT OF FIRES

How pleasant it is to have fires again! We have not time to regret summer, when the cold fogs begin to force us upon the necessity of a new kind of warmth;—a warmth not so fine as sunshine, but, as manners go, more sociable. The English get together over their fires, as the Italians do in their summer-shade. We do not enjoy our sunshine as we ought; our climate seems to render us almost unaware that the weather is fine, when it really becomes so: but for the same reason, we make as much of our winter, as the anti-social habits that have grown upon us from other causes will allow. And for a similar reason, the southern European is unprepared for a cold day. The houses in many parts of Italy are summer-houses, unprepared for winter; so that when a fit of cold weather comes, the dismayed inhabitant, walking and shivering about with a little brazier in his hands, presents an awkward image of insufficiency and perplexity. A few of our fogs, shutting up the sight of everything out of doors, and making the trees and the eaves of the houses drip like rain, would admonish him to get warm in good earnest. If “the web of

our life " is always to be " of a mingled yarn," a good warm hearthrug is not the worst part of the manufacture.

Here we are then again, with our fire before us, and our books on each side. What shall we do? Shall we take out a Life of somebody, or a Theocritus, or Petrarch, or Ariosto, or Montaigne, or Marcus Aurelius, or Molière, or Shakspeare, who includes them all? Or shall we *read* an engraving from Poussin or Raphael? Or shall we sit with tilted chairs, planting our wrists upon our knees, and toasting the up-turned palms of our hands, while we discourse of manners and of man's heart and hopes, with at least a sincerity, a good intention, and good-nature, that shall warrant what we say with the sincere, the good-intentioned, and the good-natured?

Ah—take care. You see what that old-looking saucer is, with a handle to it? It is a venerable piece of earthenware, which may have been worth, to an Athenian, about twopence; but to an author, is worth a great deal more than ever he could—deny for it. And yet he would deny it too. It will fetch his imagination more than ever it fetched potter or penny-maker. Its little shallow ircle overflows for him with the milk and honey of thousand pleasant associations. This is one of e uses of having mantel-pieces. You may often on no very rich mantel-piece a representative of all the elements physical and intellectual—

a shell for the sea, a stuffed bird or some feathers for the air, a curious piece of mineral for the earth, a glass of water with some flowers in it for the visible process of creation,—a cast from sculpture for the mind of man;—and underneath all, is the bright and ever-springing fire, running up through them heavenwards, like hope through materiality. We like to have any little curiosity of the mantelpiece kind within our reach and inspection. For the same reason, we like a small study, where we are almost in contact with our books. We like to feel them about us;—to be in the arms of our mistress Philosophy, rather than see her at a distance. To have a huge apartment for a study is like lying in the great bed at Ware, or being snug on a milestone upon Hounslow Heath. It is space and physical activity, not repose and concentration. It is fit only for grandeur and ostentation—for those who have secretaries, and are to be approached like gods in a temple. The Archbishop of Toledo, no doubt, wrote his homilies in a room ninety feet long. The Marquis Marialva must have been approached by Gil Blas through whole ranks of glittering authors, standing at due distance. But Ariosto, whose mind could fly out of its nest over all nature, wrote over the house he built, "*parva, sed apta mihi*"—small, but suited to me. However, it is to be observed, that he could not afford a larger. He was a Duodenarian, in that respect, like ourselves. We do not know how our ideas of a

study might expand with our walls. Montaigne, who was Montaigne of "that ilk" and lord of a great chateau, had a study "sixteen paces in diameter, with three noble and free prospect." He congratulates himself, at the same time, on the smallness of his circular figure, evidently from a feeling all the one in favour of smallness. "The figure of my study," says he, "is round, and has no flat (bare) wall, than what is taken up by myself and my chairs; so that the remaining parts circle present me with a view of all my books once, set upon five degrees of shelves round me" (Cotton's *Montaigne*, bk. III. ch. iii.).

A great prospect we hold to be a very disadvantageous feature, upon the same reasoning as that which makes us like to have some green boughs about our windows, and to fancy ourselves as much as possible in the country, when we are not there. I expressed a wish with regard to his study, extremely suitable to our present purpose. He would have the lamp in it seen; thus letting others share of his enjoyments, by the imagination of them.

And let my lamp at midnight hour
Be *seen* in some high lonely tower,
Where I may oft outwatch the Bear
With thrice-great Hermes; or unsphere
The Spirit of Plato, to unfold
What world or what vast regions hold
The immortal mind, that hath forsook
Her mansion in this fleshly nook.

There is a fine passionate burst of enthusiasm on the subject of a study, in Fletcher's play of the *Elder Brother*, Act I. Scene ii.:—

Sordid and dunghill minds, composed of earth,
In that gross element fix all their happiness :
But purer spirits, purged and refined,
Shake off that clog of human frailty. Give me
Leave to enjoy myself. That place, that does
Contain my books, the best companions, is
To me a glorious court, where hourly I
Converse with the old sages and philosophers ;
And sometimes for variety I confer
With kings and emperors, and weigh their counsels ;
Calling their victories, if unjustly got,
Unto a strict account ; and in my fancy,
Deface their ill-placed statues. Can I then
Part with such constant pleasures, to embrace
Uncertain vanities ? No, be it your care
To augment a heap of wealth : it shall be mine
To increase in knowledge. Lights there, for my study.

THE OLD GENTLEMAN

OUR Old Gentleman, in order to be exclusively himself, must be either a widower or a bachelor. Suppose the former. We do not mention his precise age, which would be invidious:—nor whether he wears his own hair or a wig: which would be wanting in universality. If a wig, it is a compromise between the more modern scratch and the departed glory of the toupee. If his own hair, it is white, in spite of his favourite grandson, who used to get on the chair behind him, and pull the silver hairs out ten years ago. If he is bald at top, the hairdresser, hovering and breathing about him like a second youth, takes care to give the bald place as much powder as the covered, in order that he may convey to the sensorium within a pleasing indistinctness of idea respecting the exact limits of skin and hair. He is very clean and neat; and, in warm weather, is proud of opening his waistcoat half-way down, and letting so much of his frill be seen, in order to show his hardiness as well as taste. His watch and shirt-buttons are of the best; and he does not care if he has two rings on a finger. If his health ever failed him at the club or coffee-house, he would take a walk every day to the nearest clock

of good character, purely to keep it right. He has a cane at home, but seldom uses it, on finding it out of fashion with his elderly juniors. He has a small cocked hat for gala days, which he lifts higher from his head than the round one, when bowed to. In his pockets are two handkerchiefs (one for the neck at night-time), his spectacles and his pocket-book. The pocket-book, among other things, contains a receipt for a cough, and some verses cut out of an odd sheet of an old magazine, on the lovely Duchess of A., beginning—

When beauteous Mira walks the plain.

He intends this for a common-place book which he keeps, consisting of passages in verse and prose, cut out of newspapers and magazines, and pasted in columns; some of them rather gay. His principal other books are Shakspeare's *Plays* and Milton's *Paradise Lost*; the *Spectator*, the *History of England*, the Works of Lady M. W. Montague, Pope and Churchill; Middleton's *Geography*; the *Gentleman's Magazine*; Sir John Sinclair on Longevity; several plays with portraits in character; *Account of Elizabeth Canning*, *Memoirs of George Ann Bellamy*, *Poetical Amusements at Bath-Easton*, Blair's *Works*, *Elegant Extracts*; *Junius*, as originally published; a few pamphlets on the American War and Lord George Gordon, &c., and one on the French Revolution. In his sitting-rooms are some engravings from Hogarth and Sir

Joshua; an engraved portrait of the Marquis of Granby; ditto of M. le Comte de Grasse surrendering to Admiral Rodney; a humorous piece after Penny; and a portrait of himself; painted by Sir Joshua. His wife's portrait is in his chamber, looking upon his bed. She is a little girl, stepping forward with a smile, and a pointed toe as if going to dance. He lost her when she was sixty.

The Old Gentleman is an early riser, because he intends to live at least twenty years longer. He continues to take tea for breakfast, in spite of what is said against its nervous effects; having been satisfied on that point some years ago by Dr Johnson's criticism on Hanway, and a great liking for tea previously. His china cups and saucers have been broken since his wife's death, all but one, which is religiously kept for his use. He passes his morning in walking or riding, looking in at auctions, looking after his India bonds or some such money securities, furthering some subscription set on foot by his excellent friend Sir John, or cheapening a new old print for his portfolio. He also hears of the newspapers; not caring to see them till after dinner at the coffee-house. He may also cheapen a fish or so; the fishmonger soliciting his doubting eye as he passes, with a profound bow of recognition. He eats a pear before dinner.

This dinner at the coffee-house is served up to him at the accustomed hour, in the old accustomed way, and by the accustomed waiter. If William

not bring it, the fish would be sure to be stale, the flesh new. He eats no tart; or if he tures on a little, takes cheese with it. You ht as soon attempt to persuade him out of his es, as that cheese is not good for digestion. He s port; and if he has drunk more than usual, in a more private place, may be induced by e respectful inquiries respecting the old style music, to sing a song composed by Mr Oswald Mr Lampe, such as—

Chloe, by that borrowed kiss,

Come, gentle god of soft repose,

is wife's favourite ballad, beginning—

At Upton on the hill,
There lived a happy pair.

course no such exploit can take place in the ee-room: but he will canvass the theory of that ter there with you, or discuss the weather, or markets, or the theatres, or the merits of " my North " or " my lord Rockingham;" for he ly says simply, lord; it is generally " my lord," pingly and genteely off the tongue. If alone r dinner, his great delight is the newspaper; ch he prepares to read by wiping his spectacles, fully adjusting them on his eyes, and drawing candle close to him, so as to stand sideways vixt his ocular aim and the small type. He

then holds the paper at arm's length, and dropping his eyelids half down and his mouth half open, takes cognisance of the day's information. If he leaves off, it is only when the door is opened by a new-comer, or when he suspects somebody is over-anxious to get the paper out of his hand. On these occasions he gives an important hem! or so; and resumes.

In the evening our Old Gentleman is fond of going to the theatre, or of having a game of cards. If he enjoys the latter at his own house or lodgings, he likes to play with some friends whom he has known for many years; but an elderly stranger may be introduced, if quiet and scientific; and the privilege is extended to younger men of letters; who, if ill players, are good losers. Not that he is a miser, but to win money at cards is like proving his victory by getting the baggage; and to win off a younger man is a substitute for his not being able to beat him at rackets. He breaks up early, whether at home or abroad.

At the theatre he likes a front row in the pit. He comes early, if he can do so without getting into a squeeze, and sits patiently waiting for the drawing up of the curtain, with his hands placidly lying one over the other on the top of his stick. He generously admires some of the best performers, but thinks them far inferior to Garrick, Woodward, and Clive. During splendid scenes, he is anxious that the little boy should see.

e has been induced to look in at Vauxhall n, but likes it still less than he did years back, cannot bear it in comparison with Ranelagh. thinks everything looks poor, flaring, and d. "Ah!" says he, with a sort of triumphant , "Ranelagh was a noble place! Such taste, elegance, such beauty! There was the hess of A., the finest woman in England, Sir; Mrs L., a mighty fine creature; and Lady in what's her name, that had that unfortunate r with Sir Charles. Sir, they came swimming ou like the swans."

he Old Gentleman is very particular in having slippers ready for him at the fire, when he comes e. He is also extremely choice in his snuff, delights to get a fresh box-full in Tavistock et, in his way to the theatre. His box is a osity from India. He calls favourite young es by their Christian names, however slightly ainted with them; and has a privilege of ting all brides, mothers, and indeed every es of lady, on the least holiday occasion. If husband, for instance, has met with a piece of , he instantly moves forward, and gravely es the wife on the cheek. The wife then says, y niece, Sir, from the country;" and he kisses niece. The niece, seeing her cousin biting her at the joke, says, "My cousin Harriet, Sir;" he kisses the cousin. He "never recollects weather," except during the "Great Frost,"

or when he rode down with "Jack Skrimshire to Newmarket." He grows young again in his little grand-children, especially the one which he thinks most like himself; which is the handsomest. Yet he likes best perhaps the one most resembling his wife; and will sit with him on his lap, holding his hand in silence, for a quarter of an hour together. He plays most tricks with the former, and makes him sneeze. He asks little boys in general who was the father of Zebedee's children. If his grandsons are at school, he often goes to see them; and makes them blush by telling the master or the upper-scholars, that they are fine boys, and of a precocious genius. He is much struck when an old acquaintance dies, but adds that he lived too fast; and that poor Bob was a sad dog in his youth; "a very sad dog, Sir; mightily set upon a short life and a merry one."

When he gets very old indeed, he will sit for whole evenings, and say little or nothing; but informs you that there is Mrs Jones (the housekeeper)—"She'll talk."

THE OLD LADY

IF the Old Lady is a widow and lives alone, the manners of her condition and time of life are so much the more apparent. She generally dresses in plain silks, that make a gentle rustling as she moves about the silence of her room; and she wears a nice cap with a lace border, that comes under the chin. In a placket at her side is an old enamelled watch, unless it is locked up in a drawer of her toilet, for fear of accidents. Her waist is rather tight and trim than otherwise, as she had a fine one when young; and she is not sorry if you see a pair of her stockings on a table, that you may be aware of the neatness of her leg and foot. Contented with these and other evident indications of a good shape, and letting her young friends understand that she can afford to obscure it a little, she wears pockets, and uses them well too. In the one is her handkerchief, and any heavier matter that is not likely to come out with it, such as the change of a sixpence; in the other is a miscellaneous assortment, consisting of a pocket-book, a bunch of keys, a needle-case, a spectacle-case, crumbs of biscuit, a nutmeg and grater, a smelling-bottle, and,

according to the season, an orange or apple, which after many days she draws out, warm and glossy, to give to some little child that has well behaved itself.

She generally occupies two rooms, in the neatest condition possible. In the chamber is a bed with a white coverlet, built up high and round, to look well, and with curtains of a pastoral pattern, consisting alternately of large plants, and shepherds and shepherdesses. On the mantelpiece are more shepherds and shepherdesses, with dot-eyed sheep at their feet, all in coloured ware: the man, perhaps, in a pink jacket and knots of ribbons at his knees and shoes, holding his crook lightly in one hand, and with the other at his breast, turning his toes out and looking tenderly at the shepherdess; the woman holding a crook also, and modestly returning his look, with a gipsy-hat jerked up behind, a very slender waist, with petticoat and hips to counteract, and the petticoat pulled up through the pocket-holes, in order to show the trimness of her ankles. But these patterns, of course, are various. The toilet is ancient, carved at the edges, and tied about with a snow-white drapery of muslin. Beside it are various boxes, mostly japan; and the set of drawers are exquisite things for a little girl to rummage, if ever little girl be so bold,—containing ribbons and laces of various kinds; linen smelling of lavender, of the flowers of which there is always dust in the corners;

a heap of pocket-books for a series of years; and pieces of dress long gone by, such as head-fronts, stomachers, and flowered satin shoes, with enormous heels. The stock of letters are under especial lock and key. So much for the bedroom.

In the sitting-room is rather a spare assortment of shining old mahogany furniture, or carved arm-chairs equally old, with chintz draperies down to the ground; a folding or other screen, with Chinese figures, their round, little-eyed, meek faces perking sideways; a stuffed bird, perhaps in a glass case (a living one is too much for her); a portrait of her husband over the mantel-piece, in a coat with frog-buttons, and a delicate frilled hand lightly inserted in the waistcoat; and opposite him on the wall, is a piece of embroidered literature, framed and glazed, containing some moral distich or maxim, worked in angular capital letters, with two trees or parrots below, in their proper colours; the whole concluding with an ABC and numerals, and the name of the fair industrious, expressing it to be "her work, Jan. 14, 1762." The rest of the furniture consists of a looking-glass with carved edges, perhaps a settee, a hassock for the feet, a mat for the little dog, and a small set of shelves, in which are the *Spectator* and *Guardian*, the *Turkish Spy*, a *Bible* and *Prayer Book*, Young's *Night Thoughts* with a piece of lace in it to flatten, Mrs Rowe's *Devout Exercises of the Heart*, Mrs Glasse's *Cookery*, and

perhaps *Sir Charles Grandison*, and *Clarissa*. *John Buncle* is in the closet among the pickles and preserves. The clock is on the landing-place between the two room doors, where it ticks audibly but quietly; and the landing-place, as well as the stairs, is carpeted to a nicety. The house is most in character, and properly coeval, if it is in a retired suburb, and strongly built, with wainscot rather than paper inside, and lockers in the windows. Before the windows should be some quivering poplars. Here the Old Lady receives a few quiet visitors to tea, and perhaps an early game at cards: or you may see her going out on the same kind of visit herself, with a light umbrella running up into a stick and crooked ivory handle, and her little dog, equally famous for his love to her and captious antipathy to strangers. Her grand-children dislike him on holidays, and the boldest sometimes ventures to give him a sly kick under the table. When she returns at night, she appears, if the weather happens to be doubtful, in a calash; and her servant in pattens, follows half behind and half at her side, with a lantern.

Her opinions are not many nor new. She thinks the clergyman a nice man. The Duke of Wellington, in her opinion, is a very great man; but she has a secret preference for the Marquis of Granby. She thinks the young women of the present day too forward, and the men not respectful enough; it hopes her grand-children will be better; though

differs with her daughter in several points respecting their management. She sets little value on the new accomplishments; is a great though delicate connoisseur in butcher's meat and sorts of housewifery; and if you mention lutes, expatiates on the grace and fine breeding of the minuet. She longs to have seen one danced by Sir Charles Grandison, whom she almost considers as a real person. She likes a walk of a number's evening, but avoids the new streets, bals, etc., and sometimes goes through the archyard, where her children and husband lie buried, serious, but not melancholy. She has had three great epochs in her life: her marriage—her having been at court, to see the King and Queen and Royal Family—and a compliment on her rare she once received, in passing, from Mr. Miles, whom she describes as a sad, loose man, but engaging. His plainness she thinks much exaggerated. If anything takes her at a distance from home, it is still the court; but she seldom goes, even for that. The last time but one that she went, was to see the Duke of Wirtemberg; and last probably for the last time of all, to see the Princess Charlotte and Prince Leopold. From this beatific vision she returned with the same admiration as ever for the fine comely appearance of the Duke of York and the rest of the family, to great delight at having had a near view of the Princess, whom she speaks of with smile-

ing pomp and lifted mittens, clasping them as passionately as she can together, and calling her, in a transport of mixed loyalty and self-love, a fine royal young creature, and "Daughter of England."

SUNDAY IN THE SUBURBS

BEING MORE LAST WORDS ON "SUNDAY IN LONDON": WITH A DIGRESSION ON THE NAME OF SMITH.

IN writing our articles on this subject, we have been so taken up, first with the dull look of the Sunday streets, and afterwards with the lovers who make their walls lively on the hidden side, that we fairly overlooked a feature in our Metropolitan Sabbath, eminently sabbatical; to wit, the suburbs and their holiday-makers. What a thing to forget! What a thing to forget, even if it concerned only Smith in his new hat and boots! Why, he has been thinking of them all the week; and how could we, who sympathise with all the Smith-ism and boots in existence, forget them? The hatter did not bring home his hat till last night, the bootmaker his boots till this morning. How did not Smith (and he is a shrewd fellow too, and reads us) pounce upon the hatbox, undo its clinging pasteboard lid, whisk off the silver paper, delicately develop the dear beaver, and put it on before the glass! The truth must be owned:—he sate in it half supper-time. Never

was such a neat fit. All Aldersgate, and the City Road, and the New Road, and Camden and Kentish towns, glided already before him, as he went along in it,—hatted in thought. He could have gone to sleep in it,—if it would not have spoiled his nap, and its own.

Then his boots!—Look at him.—There he goes—up Somers Town. Who would suspect, from the ease and superiority of his countenance, that he had not had his boots above two hours,—that he had been a good fourth part of the time labouring and fetching the blood up in his face with pulling them on with his boot-hooks,—and that at this moment they horribly pinch him! But he has a small foot—has Jack Smith; and he would squeeze, jam, and damn it into a thimble, rather than acknowledge it to be a bit larger than it seems.

Do not think ill of him, especially you that are pinched a little less. Jack has sympathies; and as long as the admiration of the community runs towards little feet and well-polished boots, he cannot dispense, in those quarters, with the esteem of his fellow-men. As the sympathies enlarge, Jack's boots will grow wider; and we venture to prophesy, that at forty he will care little for little feet, and much for his corns and the public good. We are the more bold in this anticipation, from certain reminiscences we have of boots of our own. We shall not enter into details, for fear of compromising the dignity of literature; but the good-

ured may think of them what they please.
n ignara mali (said Dido), *miseris succurrere co*: that is, having known what it was to wear
es too small herself, she should never measure,
her part, the capabilities of a woman's head,
the pettiness of her slippers.

Napoleon was proud of a little foot; and Cæsar,
his youth, was a dandy. So go on, Smith, and
ur your tortures like a man; especially towards
o'clock, when it will be hot and dusty.

Smith does not carry a cane with a twist at the
of it for a handle. That is for an inferior grade
holiday-maker, who pokes about the suburbs,
ing at the new buildings, or treats his fellow-
vant to a trip to White Conduit House, and an
nge by the way—always too sour. Smith has
stick or a whanghee; or, if he rides, a switch.
is not a good rider; and we must say it is his
n fault, for he rides only on Sundays, and will
t scrape acquaintance with the ostler on other
ys of the week. You may know him on horse-
ck by the brisk forlornness of his steed, the in-
ied plane of his body, the extreme outwardness
inwardness of his toes, and an expression of face
wixt ardour, fear, and indifference. He is the
st without a footman of any man in the world;
it is to say, he has the most excessive desire to be
ken for a man who ought to have one; and,
orever, the space of road behind him pursues
n, as it were, with the reproach of its emptiness.

A word, by the way, as to our use of the generic name "Smith." A correspondent wrote to us the other day, intimating that it would be a good-natured thing if we refrained in future from designating classes of men by the name of "Tomkins." We know not whether he was a Tomkins himself, or whether he only felt for some friend of that name, or for the whole body of the Tomkinses; all we know is, that he has taken the word out of our mouth for ever. How many paragraphs he may have ruined by it, we cannot say; but the truth is, he has us on our weak side. We can resist no appeal to our good-nature made by a good-natured man. Besides, we like him for the seriousness and good faith with which he took the matter to heart, and for the niceness of his sympathy. Adieu, then, name of Tomkins! Jenkins also, for a like respectful reason, we shall abstain from in future. But let nobody interfere in behalf of Smith, for Smith does not want it. Smith is too universal. Even a John Smith could not regard the use of his name as personal; for John Smith, as far as his name is concerned, has no personality. He is a class, a huge body; he has a good bit of the Directory to himself. You may see for pages together (if our memory does not deceive us) John Smith, John Smith, John Smith, or rather,

Smith, John,
Smith, John,
Smith, John,

Smith, John,

Smith, John,

Smith, John,

and so on, with everlasting Smith-Johnism, like a set of palisades or iron rails; almost as if you could make them clink as you go, with drawing something along them. The repetition is dazzling. The monotony bristles with sameness. It is a *chevaux-de-Smith*. John Smith, in short, is so public and multitudinous a personage, that we do not hesitate to say we know an excellent individual of that name, whose regard we venture thus openly to boast of, without fearing to run any danger of offending his modesty: for nobody will know whom we mean. An Italian poet says he hates the name of John, because if anybody calls him by it in the street, twenty people look out of window. Now let anybody call "John Smith!" and half Holborn will cry out "Well?"

As to other and famous Smiths, they are too strongly marked out by their fame, sometimes by their Christian names, and partly, indeed, by the uncommon lustre they attain through their very commonness, to make us at all squeamish in helping ourselves to their generic appellation at ordinary times. Who will ever think of confounding Smith, in the abstract, with Adam Smith, or Sir Sydney Smith, or the Reverend Sydney Smith, or James and Horace Smith, or Dr Southwood Smith, or any other concretion of wit, bravery, or philosophy?

By this time, following, as we talk, our fr
Jack up the road, we arrive at the first sul
tea-gardens, which he, for his part, passes
disdain; not our friend, John Smith, be it obser
for his philosophy is as universal as his name,
Jack Smith, our friend of the new hat and bo
And yet he will be a philosopher, too, by-and-
and his boots shall help him to philosophise,
all in good time. Meanwhile, we who are
enough to consult our inclination in preferenc
our grandeur, turn into the tea-gardens, wh
there is no tea going forward and not much gar
but worlds of beer, and tobacco-pipes, and alco
and in a corner behind some palings there is
fear) a sound of skittles. May no unchris
Christian hear it, who is twirling his thumbs
listening to the ring of his wine-glasses. I
hot the people look! how unpinned the goodly
dames! how tired, yet untired, the child
and how each alcove opens upon you as you
with its tall smoke, beer, and bad paint! T
what a feast to their eyes is the grass-plat! Tr
without well knowing it, do they sit down almos
much to the enjoyment of that green table
Nature's in the midst of them, as to their tol
and "half-and-half." It is something which t
do not see all the rest of the week; the first bi
grass, of any size, which they come to from ho
and here they stop and are content. For
parts, we wish they would go further, as Sn

does, and get fairly out in the fields; but they will do that, as they become freer, and wiser, and more comfortable, and learn to know and love what the wild-flowers have to say to them. At present how should they be able to hear those small angelic voices, when their ears are ringing with stocking-frames and crying children, and they are but too happy in their tired-heartedness to get to the first bit of holiday ground they can reach?

We come away, and mingle with the crowds returning home, among whom we recognise our friend of the twisted cane, and his lass, who looks the reddest, proudest, and most assured of maid-servants, and sometimes "snubs" him a little, out loud, to show her power; though she loves every blink of his eye. Yonder is a multitude collected round a Methodist preacher, whom they think far "behind his age," extremely ignorant of yesterday's unstamped, but "well-meaning," a "poor mistaken fellow, sir;" and they will not have him hustled by the police. Lord X. should hear what they say. It might put an idea in his head.

The gas-lights begin to shine; the tide of the crowd grows thinner; chapel-windows are lit up; maid-servants stand in doorways; married couples carry their children, or dispute about them; and children, not carried, cry for spite, and jumble their souls out.

48 Essays by Leigh Hunt

As for Smith, he is in some friend's room, comfortable, with his brandy and water b him, his coloured handkerchief on his knee, his boots *intermittent*.¹

¹ Intermit—"To grow mild between the fits or oxysms."—JOHNSON.

ADVICE TO THE MELANCHOLY

If you are melancholy for the first time, you will find upon a little inquiry, that others have been melancholy many times, and yet are cheerful now. If you have been melancholy many times, recollect that you have got over all those times; and try if you cannot find out means of getting over them better.

Do not imagine that mind alone is concerned in your bad spirits. The body has a great deal to do with these matters. The mind may undoubtedly affect the body; but the body also affects the mind. There is a reaction between them; and by lessening it on either side, you diminish the pain on both.

If you are melancholy, and know not why, be assured it must arise entirely from some physical weakness; and do your best to strengthen yourself. The blood of a melancholy man is thick and slow; the blood of a lively man is clear and quick. Endeavour therefore to put your blood in motion. Exercise is the best way to do it; but you may also help yourself, in moderation, with wine, or other excitements. Only you must take care so to proportion the use of any artificial stimulus, that it

may not render the blood languid by over-exciting it at first; and that you may be able to keep up, by the natural stimulus only, the help you have given yourself by the artificial.

Regard the bad weather as somebody has advised us to handle the nettle. In proportion as you are delicate with it, it will make you feel; but

“Grasp it like a man of mettle,
And the rogue obeys you well.”

Do not the less, however, on that account, take all reasonable precaution and arms against it—your boots, etc., against wet feet, and your great-coat or umbrella against the rain. It is timidity and flight which are to be deprecated, not proper armour for the battle. The first will lay you open to defeat, on the least attack. A proper use of the latter will only keep you strong for it. Plato had such a high opinion of exercise, that he said it was a cure even for a wounded conscience. Nor is this opinion a dangerous one. For there is no system, even of superstition, however severe or cruel in other matters, that does not allow a wounded conscience to be curable by some means. Nature will work out its rights and its kindness some way or other, through the worst sophistications; and this is one of the instances in which she seems to raise herself above all contingencies. The conscience may have been wounded by artificial or by

real guilt; but then she will tell it in those extremities, that even the real guilt may have been produced by circumstances. It is her kindness alone, which nothing can pull down from its predominance.

See fair play between cares and pastimes. Diminish your artificial wants as much as possible, whether you are rich or poor; for the rich man's, increasing by indulgence, are apt to outweigh even the abundance of his means, and the poor man's diminution of them renders his means the greater. On the other hand, increase all your natural and healthy enjoyments. Cultivate your afternoon fireside, the society of your friends, the company of agreeable children, music, theatres, amusing books, an urbane and generous gallantry. He who thinks any innocent pastime foolish, has either to grow wiser or is past the ability to do so. In the one case, his notion of being childish is itself a childish notion. In the other, his importance is of so feeble and hollow a cast, that it dare not move for fear of tumbling to pieces.

A friend of ours, who knows as well as any man how to unite industry with enjoyment, has set an excellent example to those who can afford the leisure, by taking two Sabbaths every week instead of one,—not Methodistical Sabbaths, but days of rest which pay true homage to the Supreme Being by enjoying His creation.

One of the best pieces of advice for an ailing

spirit is to go to no sudden extremes—to adopt no great and extreme changes in diet or other habits. They may make a man look very great and philosophic to his own mind; but they are not fit for a being, to whom custom has been truly said to be a second nature. Dr Cheyne may tell us that a drowning man cannot too quickly get himself out of the water; but the analogy is not good. If the water has become a second habit he might almost as well say that a fish could not get too quickly out of it.

Upon this point, Bacon says that we should discontinue what we think hurtful by little and little. And he quotes with admiration the advice of Celsus, that “a man do vary and interchange contraries but rather with an inclination to the more benign extreme.” “Use fasting,” he says, “and full eating, but *rather* full eating; watching and sleep, but rather sleep; sitting and exercise, but rather exercise, and the like; so shall nature be cherished, and yet taught masteries.”

We cannot do better than conclude with one or two other passages out of the same Essay, full of his usual calm wisdom. “If you fly physic in health altogether, it will be too strange for your body when you need it.” (He means that a general state of health should not make us over-confident and contemptuous of physic; but that we should use it moderately if required, that it may not be too *range* to us when required most.) “If you make

it too familiar, it will have no extraordinary effect when sickness cometh. I commend rather some diet for certain seasons, than frequent use of physic, except it be grown into a custom; for those diets alter the body more and trouble it less."

"As for the passions and studies of the mind," says he, "avoid envy, anxious fears, anger fretting inwards, subtle and knotty inquisitions, joys and exhilarations in excess, sadness not communicated" (for as he says finely, somewhere else, they who keep their griefs to themselves, are "cannibals of their own hearts"). "Entertain hopes; mirth rather than joy;" (that is to say, cheerfulness rather than boisterous merriment); "variety of delights rather than surfeit of them; wonder and admiration and therefore novelties; studies that fill the mind with splendid and illustrious objects, as histories, fables, and contemplations of nature."

originals. Their well-known heads become too anonymous. Their young ladies have casts in their eyes, a little too much on one side even for the side-long divinities of Mr Harlowe.

In a hatter's shop we can see nothing but the hats; and the reader is acquainted with our pique against them. The beaver is a curious animal, but the idea of it is not entertaining enough to convert a window full of those requisite nuisances into an agreeable spectacle. It is true, a hatter, like some other tradesmen, may be pleasanter himself, by reason of the adversity of his situation. We cannot say more for the *cruel*-shop next door,—a name justly provocative of a pun. It is customary, however, to have sign-paintings of Adam and Eve at these places; which is some relief to the monotony of the windows; only they remind us but too well of these cruel necessities to which they brought us. The baker's next ensuing is a very dull shop, much inferior to the gingerbread baker's, whose parliament we used to munch at school. The tailor's makes one as melancholy to look at it, as the sedentary persons within. The hosier's is worse; particularly if it has a Golden Leg over it; for that precious limb is certainly not symbolical of the weaver's. The windows, half board and half dusty glass, which abound in the City, can scarcely be turned to a purpose of amusement, even by the most attic of drysalters. We own we have half a longing to break them, and let in the light of nature

upon their recesses; whether they belong to those more piquant gentlemen, or to bankers, or any other high and wholesale personages. A light in one of these windows in the morning is, to us, one of the very dismallest reflections on humanity. We wish we could say something for a tallow-chandler's, because everybody abuses it: but we cannot. It must bear its fate like the man. A good deal might be said in behalf of candle-light; but in passing from shop to shop, the variety is so great, that the imagination has not time to dwell on any one in particular. The ideas they suggest must be obvious and on the surface. A grocer's and a tea-dealer's is a good thing. It fills the mind instantly with a variety of pleasant tastes, as the ladies in Italy on certain holidays pelt the gentlemen with sweetmeats. An undertaker's is as great a balk to one's spirits, as a loose stone to one's foot. It gives one a deadly jerk. But it is pleasant upon the whole to see the inhabitant looking carelessly out of doors, or hammering while humming a tune; for why should he die a death at every fresh order for a coffin? An undertaker walking merrily drunk by the side of a hearse, is a horrid object; but an undertaker singing and hammering in his top, is only rapping death himself on the knuckles. The dead are not there; the altered fellow-creature not there; but only the living man, and the exact idea of death; and he may defy that as he pleases. An apothecary's is the more

deadly thing of the two; for the coffin may be made for a good old age, but the draught and the drug are for the sickly. An apothecary's looks well however at night-time, on account of the coloured glasses. It is curious to see two or three people talking together in the light of one of them, and looking profoundly blue. There are two good things in the Italian warehouse,—its name and its olives; but it is chiefly built up of gout. Nothing can be got out of a brazier's windows, except by a thief: but we understand that it is a good place to live at for those who cannot procure water-falls. A music-shop with its windows full of title-pages, is provokingly insipid to look at, considering the quantity of slumbering enchantment inside, which only wants waking. A bookseller's is interesting, especially if the books are very old or very new, and have frontispieces. But let no author, with or without money in his pocket, trust himself in the inside, unless, like the bookseller, he has too much at home. An author is like a baker; it is for him to make the sweets, and others to buy and enjoy them. And yet not so. Let us not blaspheme the "divinity that stirs within us." The old comparison of the bee is better; for even if his toil at last is his destruction, and he is killed in order to be plundered, he has had the range of nature before he dies. His has been the summer air, and the sunshine, and the flowers; and gentle ears have listened to him, and gentle eyes have

been upon him. Let others eat his honey that please, so that he has had his morsel and his song. A bookstall is better for an author than a regular shop; for the books are cheaper, the choice often better and more ancient; and he may look at them, and move on without the horrors of not buying anything; unless indeed the master or mistress stands looking at him from the shop-door; which is a vile practice. It is necessary, we suppose, to guard against pilferers; but then ought not a stall-keeper, of any perception, to know one of us real magnanimous spoilers of our gloves from a sordid thief? A tavern and coffee-house is a pleasant sight, from its sociality; not to mention the illustrious club memories of the times of Shakspeare and the Tatlers. We confess that the commonest public-house in town is not such an eyesore to us as it is to some. There may be a little too much drinking and roaring going on in the middle of the week; but what, in the meantime, are pride, and avarice, and all the unsocial vices about? Before we object to public-houses, and above all, to their Saturday evening recreations, we must alter the systems that make them a necessary comfort to the poor and laborious. Till then, in spite of the vulgar part of the polite, we shall have an esteem for the " Devil and the Bag o' Nails "; and like to hear, as we go along on Saturday night, the applauding knocks on the table that follow the song of " Lovely Nan," or

"Brave Captain Death," or "Tobacco is an Indian weed," or "Why, Soldiers, why," or "Says Plato, why should man be vain," or that judicious and unanswerable ditty commencing—

"Now what can man more desire
Nor sitting by a sea-coal fire:
And on his knees," etc.

| u had...
done R

We will even refuse to hear anything against a gin-shop, till the various systems of the moralists and economists are discussed, and the virtuous leave off seduction and old port. In the meantime, we give up to anybody's dislike the butcher's and fishmonger's. And yet see how things go by comparison. We remember, in our boyhood, a lady from the West Indies, of a very delicate and high-bred nature, who could find nothing about our streets that more excited her admiration than the butchers' shops. She had no notion, from what she had seen in her own country, that so ugly a business could be carried on with so much neatness, and become actually passable. An open potato shop is a dull bleak-looking place, except in the height of summer. A cheesemonger's is then at its height of annoyance, unless you see a paviour or bricklayer coming out with his three penn'orth on his bread—a better sight than the glutton's waddling away from the fishmonger's. A poulticer's is a dead-bodied business, with its

birds and their lax necks. We dislike to see a bird anywhere but in the open air, alive and quick. Of all creatures, restraint and death become its winged vivacity the least. For the same reason we hate aviaries. Dog-shops are tolerable. A cook-shop does not mingle the agreeable with the useful. We hate its panes, with *Ham and Beef* scratched upon them in white letters. An ivory-turner's is pleasant, with its red and white chessmen, and little big-headed Indians on elephants; so is a toy-shop, with its endless delights for children. A coach-maker's is not disagreeable, if you can see the painting and panels. An umbrella-shop only reminds one of a rainy day, unless it is a shop for sticks also, which as we have already shown are meritorious articles. The curiosity-shop is sometimes very amusing, with its mandarins, stuffed birds, odd old carved faces, and a variety of things as indescribable as bits of dreams. The green-grocer carries his recommendation in his epithet. The hairdressers are also interesting as far as their hair goes, but not as their heads—we mean the heads in their windows. One of the shops we like least is an angling repository, with its rod for a sign, and a fish dancing in the agonies of death at the end of it. We really cannot see what equanimity there is in jerking a lacerated carp out of water by the jaws, merely because it has not the power of making a noise; for we presume that the most philosophic of anglers would hardly delight

in catching shrieking fish. An optician's is not very amusing, unless it has those reflecting-glasses in which you see your face run off on each side into attenuated width, or upwards and downwards in the same manner, in dreary longitude. A saddler's is good, because it reminds one of horses. A Christian swordmaker's or gunmaker's is edifying. A glass-shop is a beautiful spectacle; it reminds one of the splendours of a fairy place. We like a blacksmith's for the sturdy looks and thumpings of the men, the swarthy colour, the fiery sparkles and the thunder-breathing throat of the furnace. Of other houses of traffic, not common in the streets, there is something striking to us in the large, well-conditioned horses of the brewers, and the rich smoke rolling from out their chimneys. We also greatly admire a wharf, with its boats, barrels, and packages, and the fresh air from the water, not to mention the smell of pitch. It carries us at once a hundred miles over the water. For similar reasons the crabbedest old lane has its merits in our eyes, if there is a sail-maker's in it or a boat-builder's and water at the end. How used old Roberts of Lambeth to gratify the aspiring modesty of our school-coats, when he welcomed us down to his wherries and captains on a holiday, and said, "Blue against Black at any time," meaning the Westminster boys! And the colleges will ratify his praise, taking into consideration the difference of the numbers that go there from either

cloisters. But of all shops in the streets a print-seller's pleases us the most. We would rather pay a shilling to Mr Colnaghi, Mr Molteno, or Messieurs Moon and Boys, to look at their windows on one of their best-furnished days, than we would for many on exhibition. We can see fine engravings there, translations from Raphael and Titian, which are newer than hundreds of originals. We do not despise a pastry-cook's, though we would rather not eat tarts and puffs before the half-averted face of the prettiest of accountants, especially with a beggar watching and praying all the while at the door. We need not expatiate on the beauties of a florist's, where you see unwithering leaves, and roses made immortal. A dress warehouse is sometimes really worth stopping at, for its flowered draperies and richly-coloured shawls. But one's pleasure is apt to be disturbed (ye powers of gallantry! bear witness to the unwilling pen that writes it) by the fair faces that come forth, and the half-polite, half-excreting expression of the tradesman that bows them out; for here takes place the chief enjoyment of the mystery yclept shopping; and here while some ladies give the smallest trouble unwillingly, others have an infinity of things turned over, for the mere purpose of wasting their own time and the shopman's. We have read of a choice of a wife by cheese. It is difficult to speak of preference in such matters, and all such single

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modes of trial must be something equivocal; but we must say, that of all modes of the kind, we should desire no better way of seeing what ladies we admired most, and whom least, than by witnessing this trial of them at a linen-draper's counter.

A NEARER VIEW OF SOME OF THE SHOPS

IN the general glance that we have taken at shops, we found ourselves unwillingly compelled to pass some of them too quickly. It is the object therefore of the present article to enter into those more attractive thresholds, and look a little about us. We imagine a fine day; time, about noon; scene, any good brilliant street. The ladies are abroad in white and green; the beaux lounging, conscious of their waists and neckcloths; the busy pushing onward, conscious of their bills; the dogs and coaches—but we must reserve this out-of-door view of the streets for a separate article.

To begin then, where our shopping experience began, with the toy-shop—

“Visions of glory, spare our aching sight!
Ye just-breeched ages, crowd not on our soul!”

We still seem to have a lively sense of the smell of that gorgeous red paint, which was on the handle of our first wooden sword! The pewter guard also—how beautifully fretted and like silver did it look! How did we hang it round our shoulder

by the proud belt of an old ribbon;—then feel it well suspended; then draw it out of the sheath, eager to cut down four savage men for ill-using ditto of damsels! An old muff made an excellent grenadier's cap; or one's hat and feather, with the assistance of three surreptitious large pins, became fiercely modern and military. There it is, in that corner of the window the same identical sword, to all appearance, which kept us awake the first night behind our pillow. We still feel ourselves little boys, while standing in this shop; and for that matter, so we do on other occasions. A field has as much merit in our eyes, and gingerbread almost as much in our mouths, as at that daisy-plucking and cake-eating period of life. There is the trigger-rattling gun, fine of its kind, but not so complete a thing as the sword. Its memories are not so ancient: for Alexander or St George did not fight with a musket. Neither is it so true a thing; it is not "like life." The trigger is too much like that of a cross-bow; and the pea which it shoots, however hard, produces even to the imaginative faculties of boyhood a humiliating flash of the mock heroic. It is difficult to fancy a dragon killed with a pea; but the shape and appurtenances of the sword being genuine, the whole sentiment of massacre is as much in its wooden blade, as if it were steel of Damascus. The drum is still more real, though not so heroic. In the corner opposite are battle-doors and shut -

cocks, which have their maturer beauties; balls, which possess the additional zest of the danger of breaking people's windows; ropes, good for swinging and skipping, especially the long ones which others turn for you, while you run in a masterly manner up and down, or skip in one spot with an easy and endless exactitude of toe, looking alternately at their conscious faces; blood-allies, with which the possessor of a crisp finger and thumb-knuckle causes the smitten marbles to vanish out of the ring; kites, which must appear to more vital birds a ghastly kind of fowl, with their grim long white faces, no bodies, and endless tails;—cricket bats, manly to handle;—trap bats, a genteel inferiority;—swimming-corks, despicable;—horses on wheels, an imposition on the infant public;—rocking-horses, too much like Pegasus, ardent, yet never getting on;—Dutch toys, so like life that they ought to be better;—Jacob's ladders, flapping down one over another their tintinnabulary shutters;—dissected maps, from which the infant statesman may learn how to dovetail provinces and kingdoms;—paper posture-makers, who hitch up their knees against their shoulder-blades, and dangle their legs like an opera dancer;—Lilliputian plates, dishes, and other household utensils, in which a grand dinner is served up out of half an apple;—boxes of paints, to colour engravings with, always beyond the outline;—ditto of bricks, a very sensible and lasting toy, which we except

from a grudge we have against the gravity of infant geometricks;—whips, very useful for cutting people's eyes unawares;—hoops, one of the most ancient as well as excellent of toys;—sheets of pictures, from A apple-pie up to farming, military, and zoological exhibitions, always taking care that the Fly is as large as the Elephant, and the letter X exclusively appropriated to Xerxes;—musical deal-boxes, rather complaining than sweet, and more like a peal of bodkins than bells;—penny trumpets, awful at Bartlemy-tide;—jew's harps, that thrill and breathe between the lips like a metal tongue;—carts—carriages—hobby-horses, upon which the infant equestrian prances about proudly on his own feet;—in short, not to go through the whole representative body of existence—dolls, which are so dear to the maternal instincts of little girls. We protest, however, against that abuse of them, which makes them full-dressed young ladies in body, while they remain infant in face; especially when they are of frail wax. It is cultivating finery instead of affection. We prefer good honest plump limbs of cotton and sawdust, dressed in baby-linen, or even our ancient young friends, with their staring dotted eyes; red varnished faces, triangular noses, and Rosinante wooden limbs—not, it must be confessed, excessively shapely or feminine, but the reverse of fragile beauty, and prepared against all disasters.

The next step is to the Pastry-cook's, where the

plain bun is still the pleasantest thing in our eyes, from its respectability in those of childhood. The pastry, less patronised by judicious mothers, is only so much elegant indigestion: yet it is not easy to forget the pleasure of nibbling away the crust all round a raspberry or currant tart, in order to enjoy the three or four delicious semi-circular bites at the fruity plenitude remaining. There is a custard with a wall of paste round it, which provokes a siege of this kind; and the cheese-cake has its amenities of approach. The acid flavour is a relief to the mawkishness of the biffin or pressed baked apple, and an addition to the glib and quivering lightness of the jelly. Twelfth Cake, which when cut looks like the side of a rich pit of earth covered with snow, is pleasant from warmer associations. Confectionary does not seem in the same request as of old; its paint has hurt its reputation. Yet the school-boy has still much to say for its humbler suavities. Kisses are very amiable and allegorical. Eight or ten of them, judiciously wrapped up in pieces of letter-paper, have saved many a loving heart the trouble of a less eloquent billet-doux. Candied citron we look upon to be the very acmé and atticism of confectionary grace. Preserves are too much of a good thing, with the exception of the jams that retain their fruit-skins. "Jam satis." They qualify the ying. Yet marmalade must not be passed over these times, when it has been raised to the

dignity of the peerage. The other day there was a Duke of Marmalade in Hayti and a Count of Lemonade—so called, from places in which those eminent relishes are manufactured. After all, we must own that there is but one thing for which we care much at a pastry-cook's, except our old acquaintance the bun; especially as we can take up that, and go on. It is an ice. Fancy a very hot day; the blinds down, the loungers unusually languid; the pavement burning one's feet; the sun, with a strong outline in the street, baking one whole side of it like a brick-kiln; so that everybody is crowding on the other, except a man going to intercept a creditor bound for the Continent. Then think of a heaped-up ice, brought upon a salver with a spoon. What statesman, of any warmth of imagination, would not pardon the Neapolitans in summer, for an insurrection on account of the want of ice? Think of the first sidelong dip of the spoon in it, bringing away a well-sliced lump; then of the sweet wintry refreshment, that goes lengthening down one's throat; and lastly, of the sense of power and satisfaction resulting from having *had* the ice.

“ Not heaven itself can do away that slice ;
But what has been, has been ; and I have had my ice.”

We unaccountably omitted two excellent shops last week,—the fruiterer's and the sculptor's. There is great beauty as well as agreeableness in

well-disposed fruiterer's window. Here are the round piled-up oranges, deepening almost into red, and heavy with juice; the apple with its brown-red cheek, as if it had slept in the sun; the pear, swelling downwards; thronging grapes, like so many tight little bags of wine; the peach, whose handsome leathern coat strips off so finely; the pearly or ruby-like currants, heaped in light long baskets; the red little mouthful of strawberries; the larger purple ones of plums; cherries, whose old comparison with lips is better than anything new; mulberries, dark and rich with juice, fit to grow over what Homer calls the deep black-watered fountains; the swelling pomp of melons; the rough inexorable-looking cocoa-nut, milky at heart; the elaborate elegance of walnuts; the quaint cashoo-nut; almonds, figs, raisins, tamarinds, green leaves,—in short,

“ Whatever Earth, all-bearing mother, yields
In India East or West, or middle shore
In Pontus or the Punick coast, or where
Alcinous reigned, fruit of all kinds, in coat
Rough, or smooth rind, or bearded husk, or shell.”
MILTON.

There is something of more refined service in waiting upon a lady in a fruit-shop, than in a pastry-cook's. The eating of tarts, as Sir Walter Scott handsomely saith in his “ Life of Dryden ” (who used to enjoy them, it seems, in company with Madam Reeves”), is “ no inelegant pleasure; ”

it there is something still more graceful and itable in the choosing of the natural fruit, with rosy lips and red cheeks. A white hand looks tter on a basket of plums than in the doubtful uching of syrupy and sophisticated pastry. ere is less of the kitchen about the fair visitor. e is more Pomona-like, native, and to the purpose. e help her, as we would a local deity.

"Here be grapes whose lusty blood
Is the learned poets' food,
Sweeter yet did never crown
The head of Bacchus ;—nuts more brown
Than the squirrels' teeth that crack them ;
Deign, O fairest fair, to take them.
For these black ey'd Driope
Hath often times commanded me,
With my clasped knee to climb ;
See how well the lusty time
Hath deckt their rising cheeks in red,
Such as on your lips is spread.
Here be berries for a Queen,
Some be red, some be green ;
These are of that luscious meat,
The great God Pan himself doth eat.
All these, and what the woods can yield,
The hanging mountain or the field,
I freely offer, and ere long
Will bring you more, more sweet and strong,
Till when humbly leave I take,
Lest the great Pan do awake,
That sleeping lies in a deep glade,
Under a broad beech's shade."

FLETCHER'S *Faithful Shepherdess.*

How the poets double every delight for us, with their imagination and their music!

In the windows of some of the sculptors' shops artificial fruit may be seen. It is a better thing to put upon a mantel-piece than many articles of greater fashion; but it gives an abominable sensation to one's imaginary teeth. The incautious epicure who plunges his teeth into "a painted snowball" in Italy (see Brydone's *Tour in Sicily and Malta*), can hardly receive so jarring a balk to his gums, as the bare apprehension of a bite at a stone peach; but the farther you go in a sculptor's shop the better. Many persons are not aware that there are show-rooms in these places, which are well worth getting a sight of by some small purchase. For the best plaster casts the Italian shops, such as Papera's in Marylebone Street, Golden Square, and Sarti's in Greek Street, are the best. Of all the shop pleasures that are "not inelegant," an hour or two passed in a place of this kind is surely one of the most polite. Here are the gods and heroes of old, and the more beneficent philosophers, ancient and modern. You are looked upon, as you walk among them, by the paternal majesty of Jupiter, the force and decision of Minerva, the still more arresting gentleness of Venus, the budding compactness of Hebe, the breathing inspiration of Apollo. Here the Celestial Venus, naked in heart and body, ties up her locks, her drapery hanging upon her lower limbs. Here

the Belvidere Apollo, breathing forth his triumphant disdain, follows with an earnest eye the shaft that has killed the serpent. Here the Graces, linked in an affectionate group, meet you in the naked sincerity of their innocence and generosity, their hands "open as day," and two advancing for one receding. Here Hercules, like the building of a man, looks down from his propping club, as if half-disdaining even that repose. There Mercury, with his light limbs, seems just to touch the ground, ready to give a start with his foot and be off again. Bacchus, with his riper cheek and his thicker hanging locks, appears to be eyeing one of his nymphs. The Vatican Apollo near him, leans upon the stump of a tree, the hand which hangs upon it holding a bit of his lyre, the other arm thrown up over his head, as if he felt the air upon his body, and heard it singing through the strings. In a corner on another side, is the Crouching Venus of John of Bologna, shrinking just before she steps into the bath. The dancing Faun is not far off, with his animal spirits, and the Piping Faun, sedater because he possesses an art more accomplished. Among the other divinities, we look up with veneration to old Homer's head, resembling an earthly Jupiter. Plato beholds us with a bland dignity—a beauty unimpairable by years. How different from the brute impulse of Mars, the bloated self-will of Nero, or the dull and literal effeminacy of some of the other emperors! There

is a sort of presence in sculpture more than in any other representations of art. It is curious to see how instinctively people will fall into this sentiment when they come into a place with busts and statues in it, however common. They hush, as if the images could hear them. In our boyhood, some of our most delightful holidays were spent in the gallery of the late Mr West, in Newman Street. It runs a good way back from the street, crossing a small garden, and opening into loftier rooms on the other side of it. We remember how the world used to seem shut out from us the moment the street door was closed, and we began stepping down those long-carpeted aisles of pictures, with statues in the angles where they turned. We had observed everybody walked down them in this way, like the mild possessor of the mansion, and we went so likewise. We have walked down with him at night to his painting-room, as he went in his white flannel gown, with a lamp in his hand, which shot a lustrous twilight upon the pictured walls in passing; and everything looked so quiet and graceful, that we should have thought it sacrilege to hear a sound beyond the light tread of his footsteps. But it was the statues that impressed us still more than the pictures. It seemed as if Venus and Apollo waited our turning at the corners; and there they were, always the same, placid and intuitive, more human and bodily than the paintings, yet too divine to be over real. It is to that house

with the gallery in question, and the little green plot of ground, surrounded with an arcade and busts, that we owe the greatest part of our love for what is Italian and belongs to the fine arts. And if this is a piece of private history, with which the readers have little to do, they will excuse it for the sake of the greatest of all excuse, which is Love.

ON WASHERWOMEN

WRITERS, we think, might oftener indulge themselves in direct picture-making, that is to say, in detached sketches of men and things, which should be to *manners*, what those of Theophrastus are to *character*.

Painters do not always think it necessary to paint epics, or to fill a room with a series of pictures on one subject. They deal sometimes in single figures and groups; and often exhibit a profounder feeling in these little concentrations of their art, than in subjects of a more numerous description. Their *gusto*, perhaps, is less likely to be lost, on that very account. They are no longer Sultans in a seraglio, but lovers with a favourite mistress, retired and absorbed. A Madonna of Correggio's, the Bath of Michael Angelo, the Standard of Leonardo da Vinci, Titian's Mistress, and other single subjects or groups of the great masters, are acknowledged to be among their greatest performances, some of them their greatest of all.

It is the same with music. Overtures, which are supposed to make allusion to the whole progress of the story they precede, are not always the best

productions of the master; still less are choruses, and quintetts, and other pieces involving a multiplicity of actors. The overture to Mozart's *Magic Flute (Zauberflöte)* is worthy of the title of the piece; it is truly enchanting; but what are so intense, in their way, as the duet of the two lovers, *Ah Perdona*, —or the laughing trio in *Cosi Fan Tutte*,—or that passionate serenade in Don Giovanni, *Deh vieni alla finestra*, which breathes the very soul of refined sensuality! The gallant is before you, with his mandolin and his cap and feather, taking place of the nightingale for that amorous hour; and you feel that the sounds must inevitably draw his mistress to the window. Their intenseness even renders them pathetic; and his heart seems in earnest, because his senses are.

We do not mean to say, that, in proportion as the work is large and the subject numerous, the merit may not be the greater if all is good. Raphael's Sacrament is a greater work than his Adam and Eve; but his Transfiguration would still have been the finest picture in the world, had the second group in the foreground been away; nay, the latter is supposed, and, we think, with justice, to injure its effect. We only say that there are times when the numerosness may scatter the individual gusto;—that the greatest possible feeling may be proved without it;—and, above all, returning to our more immediate subject, that writers, like painters, may sometimes have leisure for excellent

detached pieces, when they want it for larger productions. Here, then, is an opportunity for them. Let them, in their intervals of history, or, if they want time for it, give us portraits of humanity. People lament that Sappho did not write more: but, at any rate, her two odes are worth twenty epics like Tryphiodorus.

But, in portraits of this kind, writing will also have a great advantage; and may avoid what seems to be an inevitable stumbling-block in paintings of a ~~similar~~ similar description. Between the matter-of-fact works of the Dutch artists, and the subtle compositions of Hogarth, there seems to be a medium reserved only for the pen. The writer only can tell you all he means,—can let you into his whole mind and intention. The moral insinuations of the painter are, on the one hand, apt to be lost for want of distinctness; or tempted, on the other, by their visible nature, to put on too gross a shape. If he leaves his meanings to be imagined, he may unfortunately speak to unimaginative spectators, and generally does; if he wishes to explain himself so as not to be mistaken, he will paint a set of comments upon his own incidents and characters, rather than let them tell for themselves. Hogarth himself, for instance, who never does anything without a sentiment or a moral, is too apt to perk them both in your face, and to be over-redundant in his combinations. His persons, in many instances, seem too much taken away from

their proper indifference to effect, and to be made too much of conscious agents and joint contributors. He "o'er-informs his tenements." His very goods and chattels are didactic. He makes a capital remark of a cow's horn, and brings up a piece of cannon in aid of a satire on vanity.¹ It is the writer only who, without hurting the most delicate propriety of the representation, can leave no doubt of all his intentions,—who can insinuate his object, in two or three words, to the dullest conception; and, in conversing with the most foreign minds, take away all the awkwardness of interpretation. What painting gains in universality to the eye, it loses by an infinite proportion in power of suggestion to the understanding.

There is something of the sort of sketches we are recommending in Sterne: but Sterne had a general connected object before him, of which the parts apparently detached were still connecting links: and while he also is apt to overdo his subject like Hogarth, is infinitely less various and powerful. The greatest master of detached portrait is Steele: but his pictures too form a sort of link in a chain. Perhaps the completest specimen of what we mean in the English language is Shenstone's "School-Mistress," by far his best production, and a most natural, quiet, and touching old dame.—But

¹ See the cannon going off in the turbulent portrait of a General Officer, and the cow's head coming just over that of the citizen who is walking with his wife.

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what? Are we leaving out *Chaucer*? Alas, we thought to be doing something a little original, and find it all existing already, and in unrivalled perfection, in his portraits of the Canterbury Pilgrims! We can only dilate, and vary upon his principle.

But we are making a very important preface to what may turn out a very trifling subject, and must request the reader not to be startled at the homely specimen we are about to give him, after all this gravity of recommendation. Not that we would apologise for homeliness, as homeliness. The beauty of this unlimited power of suggestion in writing is, that you may take up the driest and most commonplace of all possible subjects, and strike a light out of it to warm your intellect and your heart by. The fastidious habits of polished life generally incline us to reject, as incapable of interesting us, whatever does not present itself in a graceful shape of its own, and a ready-made suit of ornaments. But some of the plainest weeds become beautiful under the microscope. It is the benevolent provision of nature, that in proportion as you feel the necessity of extracting interest from common things, you are enabled to do so;—and the very least that this familiarity with homeliness will do for us is to render our artificial delicacy less liable to annoyance, and to teach us how to grasp the nettles till they obey us.

The reader sees that we are Wordsworthians

enough not to confine our tastes to the received elegancies of society; and, in one respect, we go further than Mr Wordsworth, for, though as fond, perhaps, of the country as he, we can manage to please ourselves in the very thick of cities, and even find there as much reason to do justice to Providence, as he does in the haunts of sportsmen, and anglers, and all-devouring insects.

To think, for instance, of that laborious and inelegant class of the community—*Washerwomen*, and of all the hot, disagreeable dabbling, smoking, splashing, kitcheny, cold-dining, anti-company-receiving associations, to which they give rise. What can be more annoying to any tasteful lady or gentleman, at their first waking in the morning, than when that dreadful thump at the door comes, announcing the tub-tumbling viragoes, with their brawny arms and brawling voices? We must confess, for our own parts, that our taste, in the abstract, is not for washerwomen; we prefer Dryads and Naiads, and the figures that resemble them;—

Fair forms, that glance amid the green of woods,
Or from the waters give their sidelong shapes
Half swelling.

Yet we have lain awake sometimes in a street in town, after this first confounded rap, and pleased ourselves with imagining how equally the pains and enjoyments of this world are dealt out, and what a

pleasure there is in the mere contemplation of any set of one's fellow-creatures and their humours, when our knowledge has acquired humility enough to look at them steadily.

The reader knows the knock which we mean. It comes like a lump of lead and instantly wakes the maid, whose business it is to get up, though she pretends not to hear it. Another knock is inevitable, and it comes, and then another; but still Betty does not stir, or stirs only to put herself in a still snugger posture, knowing very well that they must knock again. "Now, 'drat that Betty," says one of the washerwomen; "she hears as well as we do, but the deuce a bit will she move till we give her another"; and at the word another, down goes the knocker again. "It's very odd," says the master of the house, mumbling from under the bed-clothes, "that Betty does not get up to let the people in; I've heard that knocker three times." "Oh," returns the mistress, "she's as lazy as she's high,"—and off goes the chamber-bell,—by which time Molly, who begins to lose her sympathy with her fellow-servant in impatience of what is going on, gives her one or two conclusive digs in the side; when the other gets up, and rubbing her eyes, and mumbling, and hastening and shrugging herself downstairs, opens the door with—"Lard, Mrs Watson, I hope you haven't been standing here long?"—"Standing here long, Mrs Betty! Oh, tell me; people might stand starving their

legs off, before you'd put a finger out of bed." — "Oh, don't say so, Mrs Watson; I'm sure I always rises at the first knock; and there—you'll find everything comfortable below, with a nice hock of ham, which I made John leave for you." At this the washerwomen leave their grumbling, and shuffle downstairs, hoping to see Mrs Betty early at breakfast. Here, after warming themselves at the copper, taking a mutual pinch of snuff, and getting things ready for the wash, they take a snack at the promised hock; for people of this profession have always their appetite at hand, and every interval of labour is invariably cheered by the prospect of *having something* at the end of it. "Well," says Mrs Watson, finishing the last cut, "some people thinks themselves mighty generous for leaving one what little they can't eat; but, howsoever, it's better than nothing." "Ah," says Mrs Jones, who is a minor genius, "one must take what one can get now-a-days; but Squire Hervey's for my money." "Squire Hervey!" rejoins Mrs Watson, "what's that the great what's-his-name as lives yonder?" "Ay," returns Mrs Jones, "him as has a niece and nevvy, as they say eats him out of house and land"; and here commences the history of all the last week of the whole neighbourhood round, which continues amidst the dipping and splashing fists, the rumbling of suds, and the creaking of wringings-out, till an hour or two are elapsed; and then for another snack and a

pinch of snuff, till the resumption of another hour's labour or so brings round the time for first breakfast. Then, having had nothing to signify since five, they sit down at half-past six in the wash-house, to take their own meal before the servants meet at the general one. This is the chief moment of enjoyment. They have just laboured enough to make the tea and bread and butter welcome, are at an interesting point of the conversation, (for there they contrive to leave off on purpose), and so down they sit, fatigued and happy, with their red elbows and white corrugated fingers, to a tub turned upside down, and a dish of good Christian souchong, fit for a body to drink.

We could dwell a good deal upon this point of time, but shall only admonish the fastidious reader, who thinks he has all the taste and means of enjoyment to himself, how he looks with scorn upon two persons, who are perhaps at this moment the happiest couple of human beings in the street,—who have discharged their duty, have earned their enjoyment, and have health and spirits to relish it to the full. A washerwoman's cup of tea may vie with the first drawn cork at a bon-vivant's table, and the complacent opening of her snuff-box with that of the most triumphant politician over a scheme of partition. We say nothing of the continuation of their labours, of the scandal they me, or the complaints they pour forth, when first set off again in the indolence of a satisfied

appetite, at the quantity of work which the mistress of the house, above all other mistresses, is sure to heap upon them. Scandal and complaint, in these instances, do not hurt the complacency of our reflections; they are in their proper sphere; and are nothing but a part, as it were, of the day's work, and are so much vent to the animal spirits. Even the unpleasant day which the work causes upstairs in some houses,—the visitors which it excludes, and the leg of mutton which it hinders from roasting, are only so much enjoyment kept back and contrasted, in order to be made keener the rest of the week. Beauty itself is indebted to it, and draws from that steaming out-house and splashing tub the well-fitting robe that gives out its figure, and the snowy cap that contrasts its curls and its complexion. In short, whenever we hear a washerwoman at her foaming work, or see her plodding towards us with her jolly warm face, her mob cap, her black stockings, clattering pattens, and tub at arm's length resting on her hip-joint, we look upon her as a living lesson to us to make the most both of time and comfort, and as a sort of allegorical compound of pain and pleasure, a little too much, perhaps, in the style of Rubens.

THE BUTCHER

BUTCHERS AND JURIES—BUTLER'S DEFENCE OF THE ENGLISH DRAMA, ETC.

It was observed by us the other day in a journal that “butchers are wisely forbidden to be upon juries; not because they are not as good as other men by nature, and often as truly kind; but because the habit of taking away the lives of sheep and oxen inures them to the sight of blood, and violence, and mortal pangs.”

The *Times*, in noticing this passage, corrected our error. There neither is, nor ever was, it seems, a law forbidding butchers to be upon juries; though the reverse opinion has so prevailed among all classes, that Locke takes it for granted in his *Treatise on Education*, and our own authority was the author of *Hudibras*, a man of very exact and universal knowledge. The passage that was in our mind is in his *Posthumous Works*, and is worth quoting on other accounts. He is speaking of those pedantic and would-be classical critics who judge the poets of one nation by those of another. Butler's resistance of their pretensions is the more

nourable to him, inasmuch as the prejudices of his own education, and even the propensity of his genius, lay on the learned and anti-impulsive side. But his judgment was thorough-going and candid. The style is of the off-hand careless order, after the fashion of the old satires and epistles, though it so rough:—

“ An English poet should be tried by his peers,
And not by pedants and philosophers,
Incompetent to judge poetic fury,
As butchers are forbid to be of a jury,
Besides the most intolerable wrong
To try their masters in a foreign tongue,
By foreign jurymen like Sophocles,
Or *tales*¹ falser than Euripides,
When not an English native dares appear
To be a witness for the prisoner,—
When all the laws they use to arraign and try
The innocent, and wrong’d delinquent by,
Were made by a foreign lawyer and his pupils,
To put an end to all poetic scruples ;

¹ Tales (Latin), persons chosen to supply the place of men panelled upon a jury or inquest, and not appearing when called. [We copy this from a very useful and pregnant volume, called the *Treasury of Knowledge*, full of such heaps of information as are looked for in lists and vocabularies, and occupying the very margins with proverbs. Mr Disraeli, however, objects to this last overflow of contents, but not, we think, with his usual good sense and gratitude, as a lover of books. These proverbial sayings, which are the most universal things in the world, appear to us to have a particularly good effect in thus coming in to refresh one among the technicalities of knowledge.]

Essays by Leigh Hunt

And by the advice of virtuosi Tuscans,
Determined all the doubts of socks and buskins,—
Gave judgment on all past and *future plays*,
As is apparent by Speroni's case,
Which Lope Vega first began to steal.
And after him the French *filou* Corneille ;
And since, our English plagiaries *nim*
And steal their far-fetch'd criticisms from him,
And by an action, falsely laid of *trover*,
The lumber for their proper goods recover,
Enough to furnish all the lewd impeachers
Of witty Beaumont's poetry and Fletcher's,
Who for a few *misprisions of wit*,
Are charged by those who ten times worse commit,
And for misjudging some unhappy scenes,
Are censured for it *with more unlucky sense* :

Now happily said!)

When all their worst miscarriages delight
And please more than the best that pedants write."

Having been guilty of this involuntary scandal
inst the butchers, we would fain make them
ends by saying nothing but good of them and
ir trade; and truly if we find the latter part
the proposition a little difficult, they themselves
for the most part a jovial, good-humoured
e, and can afford the trade to be handled as
rply as their beef on the block. There is cut
l come again in them. Your butcher breathes
atmosphere of good living. The beef mingles
dly with his animal nature. He grows fat with
best of it, perhaps with inhaling its very essence;

and has no time to grow spare, theoretical, and hypochondriacal, like those whose more thinking stomachs drive them upon the apparently more innocent but less easy and analogous intercommunications of fruit and vegetables. For our parts, like all persons who think at all,—nay, like the butcher himself, when he catches himself in a strange fit of meditation, after some doctor perhaps has “kept him low,”—we confess to an abstract dislike of eating the sheep and lamb that we see in the meadow; albeit our concrete regard for mutton is considerable, particularly Welsh mutton. But Nature has a beautiful way of reconciling all necessities that are unmalignant; and as butchers at present must exist, and sheep and lambs would not exist at all in civilised countries, and crop the sweet grass so long, but for the brief pang at the end of it, he is as comfortable a fellow as can be,—one of the liveliest ministers of her mortal necessities,—of the deaths by which she gives and diversifies life; and has no more notion of doing any harm in his vocation, than the lamb that swallows the lady-bird on the thyme. A very pretty insect is she, and has had a pretty time of it; a very calm, clear feeling, healthy, and, therefore, happy little woollen giant, compared with her, is the lamb,—her butcher; and an equally innocent and festive personage is the butcher himself, notwithstanding the popular fallacy about juries, and the salutary misgiving his beholders feel when they

see him going to take the lamb out of the meadow, or entering the more tragical doors of the slaughter-house. His thoughts, while knocking down the ox, are of skill and strength, and not of cruelty. And the death, though it may not be the very best of deaths, is, assuredly, none of the worst. Animals, that grow old in an artificial state, would have a hard time of it in a lingering decay. Their mode of life would not have prepared them for it. Their blood would not run lively enough to the last. We doubt even whether the John Bull of the herd, when about to be killed, would change places with a very gouty, irritable old gentleman, or be willing to endure a grievous being of his own sort, with legs answering to the gout; much less if Cow were to grow old with him, and plague him with endless lowings, occasioned by the loss of her beauty, and the increasing insipidity of the hay. A human being who can survive those ulterior vaccinations must indeed possess some great reliefs of his own, and deserve them, and life may reasonably be a wonderfully precious thing in his eyes; nor shall excuse be wanting to the vaccinators, and what made them such, especially if they will but grow a little more quiet and ruminating. But who would have the death of some old, groaning, aching, effeminate, frightened, lingerer in life, such as Mæcenas for example, compared with a bold, jolly knock-down blow, at a reasonable end, whether of hatchet or of apoplexy,—

whether the bull's death or the butcher's? Our own preference, it is true, is for neither. We are for an excellent, healthy, happy life, of the very best sort; and a death to match it, going out calmly as a summer's evening. Our taste is not particular. But we are for the knock-down blow rather than the death-in-life.

The butcher, when young, is famous for his health, strength, and vivacity, and for his riding any kind of horse down any sort of hill, with a tray before him, the reins for a whip, and no hat on his head. It was a gallant of this sort that Robin Hood imitated, when he beguiled the poor Sheriff into the forest, and showed him his own deer to sell. The old ballads apostrophise him well as the "butcher so bold," or better—with the accent on the last syllable—"thou bold butcher." No syllable of his was to be trifled with. The butcher keeps up his health in middle life, not only with the food that seems so congenial to flesh, but with rising early in the morning, and going to market with his own or his master's cart. When more sedentary, and very jovial and good-humoured, he is apt to expand into a most analogous state of fat and smoothness, with silken tones and a short breath,—harbingers, we fear, of asthma and gout; or the kindly apoplexy comes, and treats him as he treated the ox.

When rising in the world, he is indefatigable on Saturday nights, walking about in the front of

those white-clothed and joint-abounding open shops, while the meat is being half-cooked beforehand with the gas-lights. The rapidity of his "What-d'ye-buy?" on these occasions is famous; and both he and the good housewives, distracted with the choice before them, pronounce the legs of veal "*beautiful—exceedingly.*"

How he endures the meat against his head, as he carries it about on a tray, or how we endure that he should do it, or how he can handle the joints as he does with that habitual indifference, or with what floods of hot water he contrives to purify himself of the exoterical part of his philosophy on going to bed, we cannot say; but take him all in all, he is a fine specimen of the triumph of the general over the particular.

The only poet that was the son of a butcher (and the trade may be proud of him) is Akenside, who naturally resorted to the "Pleasures of Imagination." As to Wolsey, we can never quite picture him to ourselves apart from the shop. He had the cardinal butcher's-virtue of a love of good eating, as his picture shows; and he was foreman all his life to the butcher Henry the Eighth. We beg pardon of the trade for this application of their name: and exhort them to cut the cardinal, and stick to the poet.

THE MAID-SERVANT

MUST be considered as young, or else she has married the butcher, the butler, or her cousin, or has otherwise settled into a character distinct from her original one, so as to become what is properly called the domestic. The Maid-Servant, in her apparel, is either slovenly and fine by turns, and dirty always; or she is at all times neat and tight, and dressed according to her station. In the latter case, her ordinary dress is black stockings, a stuff gown, a cap, and a neck-handkerchief pinned cornerwise behind. If you want a pin, she feels about her, and has always one to give you. On Sundays and holidays, and perhaps of afternoons, she changes her black stockings for white, puts on a gown of a better texture and fine pattern, sets her cap and her curls jauntily, and lays aside the neck-handkerchief for a high-body, which, by the way, is not half so pretty.

The general furniture of her ordinary room, the kitchen, is not so much her own as her master's and mistress's, and need not be described: but in a drawer of the dresser or the table, in company with a duster and a pair of snuffers, may be found

some of her property, such as a brass thimble, a pair of scissors, a thread-case, a piece of wax candle much wrinkled with the thread, an odd volume of *Pamela*, and perhaps a sixpenny play, such as George Barnwell or Southerne's *Oroonoko*. There is a piece of looking-glass in the window. The rest of her furniture is in the garret, where you may find a good looking-glass on the table; and in the window a Bible, a comb and a piece of soap. Here stands also, under stout lock and key, the mighty mystery,—the box,—containing, among other things, her clothes, two or three song-books, consisting of nineteen for the penny; sundry tragedies at a halfpenny the sheet; the *Whole Nature of Dreams Laid Open*, together with the *Fortune-teller* and the *Account of the Ghost of Mrs Veal*; the *Story of the Beautiful Zoa* “who was cast away on a desert island, showing how,” &c.; some half-crowns in a purse, including pieces of country-money; a silver penny wrapped up in cotton by itself; a crooked sixpence, given her before she came to town, and the giver of which has either forgotten or been forgotten by her, she is not sure which;—two little enamel boxes, with looking-glass in the lids, one of them a fairing, the other “a Trifle from Margate”; and lastly, various letters, square and ragged, and directed in all sorts of spellings, chiefly with little letters for capitals. One of them, written by a girl who went to a day-school, is directed “Miss.”

In her manners, the Maid-servant sometimes imitates her young mistress; she puts her hair in papers, cultivates a shape, and occasionally contrives to be out of spirits. But her own character and condition overcome all sophistications of this sort; her shape, fortified by the mop and scrubbing-brush, will make its way; and exercise keeps her healthy and cheerful. From the same cause her temper is good; though she gets into little heats when a stranger is over saucy, or when she is told not to go so heavily downstairs, or when some un-thinking person goes up her wet stairs with dirty shoes,—or when she is called away often from dinner; neither does she much like to be seen scrubbing the street-door steps of a morning; and sometimes she catches herself saying, “Drat that butcher,” but immediately adds, “God forgive me.” The tradesmen indeed, with their compliments and arch looks, seldom give her cause to complain. The milkman bespeaks her good-humour for the day with “Come, pretty maids” :—then follow the butcher, the baker, the oilman, &c., all with their several smirks and little loiterings; and when she goes to the shops herself, it is for her the grocer pulls down his string from its roller with more than ordinary whirl, and tosses his parcel into a tie.

Thus pass the mornings between working, and singing, and giggling, and grumbling, and being flattered. If she takes any pleasure unconnected with her office before the afternoon, it is when s

runs up the area-steps or to the door to hear an purchase a new song, or to see a troop of soldiers go by; or when she happens to thrust her head out of a chamber window at the same time with servant at the next house, when a dialogue is fallibly ensues, stimulated by the imaginary obstacles between. If the Maid-servant is wise the best part of her work is done by dinner-time and nothing else is necessary to give perfect zest to the meal. She tells us what she thinks of it when she calls it "a bit o' dinner." There is the same sort of eloquence in her other phrase, "a cup o' tea"; but the old ones, and the washerwomen beat her at that. After tea in great houses, she goes with the other servants to hot cockles, What-are-my-thoughts-like, and tells Mr John "have done then"; or if there is a ball given that night, they throw open the doors, and make use of the music upstairs to dance by. In smaller houses she receives the visits of her aforesaid cousin; or sits down alone, or with a fellow maid-servant, to work; talks of her young master or mistress as Mr Ivins (Evans); or else she calls to mind her own friends in the country; where she thinks the cows and "all that" beautiful, now she is away. Meanwhile, if she is lazy, she snuffs the candle with her scissors; or if she has eaten more heartily than usual, she sighs double the usual number of times, and thinks that tender hearts were born to be unhappy.

Such being the Maid-servant's life in-doors, she scorns, when abroad, to be anything but a creature of sheer enjoyment. The Maid-servant, the sailor, and the school-boy, are the three beings that enjoy a holiday beyond all the rest of the world;—and all for the same reason,—because their inexperience, peculiarity of life, and habit of being with persons of circumstances or thoughts above them, give them all, in their way, a cast of the romantic. The most active of the money-getters is a vegetable compared with them. The Maid-servant when she first goes to Vauxhall, thinks she is in heaven. A theatre is all pleasure to her, whatever is going forward, whether the play or the music, or the waiting which makes others impatient, or the munching of apples and gingerbread, which she and her party commence almost as soon as they have seated themselves. She prefers tragedy to comedy, because it is grander, and less like what she meets with in general; and because she thinks it more in earnest also, especially in the love-scenes. Her favourite play is *Alexander the Great, or the Rival Queens*. Another great delight is in going a shopping. She loves to look at the patterns in the windows, and the fine things labelled with those corpulent numerals of "only 7s."—"only 6s. 6d." She has also, unless born and bred in London, been to see my Lord Mayor, the fine people coming out of court, and the "beasties" in the Tower; and at all events she has been to Astley's

Essays by Leigh Hunt

he Circus, from which she comes away, y smitten with the rider, and sore with ng at the clown. But it is difficult to say pleasure she enjoys most. One of the com- t of all is the fair, where she walks through idless round of noise, and toys, and gallant itices, and wonders. Here she is invited in urteous and well-dressed people, as if she were istress. Here also is the conjuror's booth, the operator himself, a most stately and l person all in white, calls her Ma'am; and o John by her side, in spite of his laced hat, good enough, sir, to hand the card to the

may her "cousin" turn out as true as he e is; or may she get home soon enough and g enough to be as happy again next time.

RAINY-DAY POETRY

. . . Dicessit ab astris
Humor, et ima petit.—LUCAN.

Humour sets the welkin free,
And condescends with you and me.

CRITICS lament over a number of idle rhymes in the works of Swift, that may come under the above title; and wish, at least, that they had never been published. They designate them as the sweepings of his study, his private weaknesses, unworthy of so great a genius, and exclaim against his friends for collecting them. I really cannot see the humiliation. If he had written nothing else, there might be some colour of accusation against him; though I do not see why a dean is bound to be a dull private gentleman. But if he had written nothing else, I think it may be pretty safely pronounced that he would not have written these trifles. They bear the mark of a great hand, trifling as they are. Their extravagance is that of power, not of weakness; and the wilder Irish waggery of Dr Sheridan, slatternly and muddled, stands rebuked before them. What should we have done had we ! Mary the Cook-maid's Letter, and the (

Question about the Barracks? These, to be sure, are accepted by everybody; but I like, for my part, to hear all that such an exquisite wag has to say. I except the coarseness of two or three pieces, which I never read. I wish the critics could say as much. I have such a disgust of this kind of writing that there are poems, even in Chaucer, which I never look at. But this does not hinder me from loving all the rest. Perhaps I carry my dislike of what I allude to too far. It is possible that it may not be without its use in certain stages of society. But so it is, and I mention it, that I may not be thought to be confounding or recommending two different things.

It is our own fault if we take this Rainy-Day Poetry for more than the author intended it. It is our loss if we do not take it for as much. I give it this title, because we may suppose it written to while away the tedium of rainy days, or of the feelings that resemble it. There is also Rainy-Day Prose, of a great deal of which my own writings are composed, though I was hardly aware of it at the time. I relish all that Swift has favoured us with, of either kind. The only approach that we minor humorists can make to such men, is to show that we understand them in all their moods,—that nothing is lost on us. The greatest fit of laughter I ever remember to have had, was in reading the *Commination* piece against William Wood, in which all his enemies are introduced execrating

him in puns. The zest was heightened by the presence of a deaf old lady, who had desired a friend of mine and myself to take a book, while waiting to see a kinsman of hers. Her imperturbable face, the shocking things we said before her, and even the dread of being thought rude, produced a sort of double drama in our minds, extreme and irresistible.

A periodical writer derives the same privileges from necessity which other men do from wit. The rainy days here in Italy are very rare compared with those of England; but the damps which the latter produce within us sometimes make their appearance when we are away; and a . . . In short, it is not necessary to inform the reader that periodical writers produce a great deal of rainy-day poetry, voluntary or involuntary. If he excuses it, all is well. I shall, therefore, whenever I am inclined, make use of this title to pass off rhymes that I have more pleasure in writing than in publishing. The other day I was moved to vent my pluviose indignation on the subject of Ferdinand, King of Spain, a personage who has had the extraordinary fortune (even for a prince) to become the spectacle of the whole world, precisely because he is destitute of every quality which deserves their notice. That my poem might be as small as my subject, I wrote it in Lilliputian lines and minia e c: but in consequence of the variety of t pressed upon me as I proceeded, three out of

four became neither one thing nor t'other, and are not worth indulgence. The exordium I lay before the reader, because it contains an anecdote of his majesty's first appearance on the stage, with which he may not be acquainted. I had it from a Spanish gentleman now in England.

I sing the least of things,—
To wit, the least of kings.

Imprimis, when the nation
First raised him to his station,
And blest him as he rid
In triumph to Madrid,
A gentleman who saw him
(And hugely longed to claw him)
Said, that he never showed
One feeling on the road,
But sat in stupid pride,
Staring on either side,
Letting his hand be kissed
(I think I see the fist).
As if, where'er they took it,
They meant to pick his pocket ;
And goggling like an owl,—
The hideous beaky fool !

The last line is emphatic! I had not patience to continue in a proper style of burlesque. Ferdinand has astonished even those who were never astonished at kings before. And yet what was to be expected from this portentous specimen of royalty,—royalty, naked, instinctive, unmiti-

gated, unadorned? What examples he had before him! What an education! What contempt of decencies, public and private! What a mother, what a minister, what a father! The same gentleman who related to me the above anecdote told me that he had seen the old king dining in public, and that the spectacle was disgusting beyond description. Such brutal feeding, such pawing and grinding, such absorption in the immediate appetite and will, and contempt of everything else in the world, could only be exhibited by one who was accustomed to set up the mere consciousness of royalty as superior to every other consideration. This is Ferdinand's principle. He has no other, nor ever had, even when he petitioned to be made a member of Bonaparte's family. Bonaparte dazzled him, like something supernatural, and was an emperor to boot; but if he had not been one, it would have made no difference. The royal will, the immediate security, interest, or even whim, sanctions everything; and royalty is to come out clear from the furnace upon the strength of its divine right, let it have gone through what it may. How much right have we to complain of it, flattering it as we do, even in the best regulated monarchies? The frog in the fable swelled herself to bursting, as it was; but if she had, besides, had all frogland for spectators and applauders, if she had been puffed up with huzzas! and vivas! and been made a worshipped spectacle wherever

she carried herself, who would have wondered all her children's bursting themselves, one after t other, in spite of her example? I pity, for n part (next to suffering nations), every king existence, except Ferdinand; and will pity him t when he is put out of a condition to slaught those who would have made him an honest man.

Pleasant C. R.! let me recall my happier rhy and rainy days by thinking of thee. C. R. is one those happy persons whom goodness, imaginatio and a tranquil art conspire to keep in a perpet youth. He and his brother once called upon a m whom I knew, who told me he had seen "the you gentlemen," and yet this man was not old, and C. was seven-and-thirty if he was a day. C. R. has quaint manner with him, which some take : simplicity. It is, but not of the sort which th take it for. I could hear it talk for an hour : together, and have heard it, delighting all the while the interest he can take in a trifle, and the enterta ment he can raise out of it. His simplicity is ar thing but foolishness, though it is full of *bonheur*. He is a nice observer. At the same time he is romantic as a sequestered schoolmaster, and w make as grave Latin quotations. He produces history out of a whistle. He will describe to y a steam-engine or a water-mill, with all t machinery and the noise to boot, till you die at or with laughter and real interest at the gravity of enthusiasm. He makes them appear living thin

as the fulling-mills did to Don Quixote. One day he gave us all an account of a man he had seen in the Strand, who was standing with a pole in his hand, at the top of which was a bladder, and underneath the bladder a bill. He told us what a mystery this excited in the minds of the spectators, and how they looked, first at "the man," then at "the bill," and then "at the bladder;"—and again, said he, they looked at the bladder, then at the bill, and so on, ringing the changes on these words till we saw nothing before us in life but a man holding these two phenomena. We begged him to change the word "man" into "body," that charm of alliteration might be added; and he complied with a passing laugh, and the greatest good nature conceivable, entering into the joke, and yet feeling a real gravity in commenting upon the people's astonishment. This combination of "bill, body, and bladder" was, after all, nothing but a man standing with an advertisement of blacking, or an eating-house, or some such thing. We have been thankful ever since that "such things are."

I once rode with C. R. from Gainsborough to Doncaster, making rhymes with him all the way on the word philosopher. We made a hundred and fifty, and were only stopped by arriving at our journey's end. Readers uninitiated in doggerel may be startled at this; but nothing is more true. The *words* were all different, and legitimate doggerel rhymes; though, undoubtedly, the

rhymes themselves must often have been repeated, that is to say the same consonants must have begun them. The following is a rainy-day production on the same subject, exhausting, we believe, the real alphabetical quantum of rhymes, with their combinations. But it is submitted with deference to the learned. We dedicate it to our pleasant friend, heartily wishing we could have such another ride with him to-morrow.

You talk of rhyming to the word Philosopher.—
 That jade the Muse ! It's doubtless very cross of her
 To stint one even in rhymes, which are the dross of her ;
 I can't but think that it's extremely gross of her ;
 I told her once how very wrong it was of her :
 If I could help, I'd not ask one, that's poz, of her :
 I would not quote *procumbit humis bos* of her ;
 Nor earn a single lettuce yclept Cos of her ;
 I would not speak to Valcnaer or to Voss of her :
 Nor Dryden's self, although the Great High Joss of her :
 I would not care for the *divinum os* of her.
 No, though she rhymed me the whole *mos, flos, ros*, of her :
 Walking in woods I wouldn't brush the moss off her :
 Nor in the newest green grown take the gloss of her :
 In winter-time I wouldn't keep the snows off her :
 And yet I don't think either I could go so far :
 Thy anger, certainly, I couldn't show so far :
 I didn't think the hatchet I could throw so far.
 Good heavens ! now I reflect, I love the nose of her :
 I could cut off my hair to tie the hose of her :
 The brightest eyes are nothing to the doze of her :
 Love in my heart the smallest keepsake stows of her :
 O, for as many kisses as I chose of her !
 Since I had one there's no sweet air but blows of her :

There's not a stream but murmurs as it flows of her :
I could exalt to heav'n the very clothes of her.
I wonder how a man can speak in prose of her :
Yet some have e'en said ill (while my blood froze) of her :
Never again shall any be that crows offer
To do her harm, or with his *quid pro quos* huff her.
With pleasure I could every earthly woe suffer
Rather than see the charmer's little toe suffer :
'Tis only gouty Muses that should so suffer.

ENGLISH AND FRENCH FEMALES THEIR COSTUMES AND BEARING

THE writer of the following letter is very unmerciful on the ribands, plumes, and other enormities of the present mode of dress, and having torn these to pieces, proceeds to rend away veils and gowns, and fall plumb down upon the pretty feet of the wearers, and their mode of walking; but when our fair readers see what he says of their faces, and call to mind how Momus found fault with the steps of Venus herself, we trust they will forgive his fury for the sake of his love, and consider whether so fond an indignation does not contain something worth their reflection.

FRENCH LADIES *VERSUS* ENGLISH *To the Editor*

SIR,—It is Mrs Gore, I think, in one of her late novels, who says, that ninety-nine English women out of a hundred, dress infinitely worse than as many French; but that the *hundredth* dresses with a neatness, elegance, and propriety which is not to be paralleled on the other side of the Channel. On my relating this to a fair relation of mine, she

replied, "Very true,—only I never saw *that hundredth*." Nor has anyone else. Without exception, the English women wear the prettiest faces and the ugliest dresses of any in the known world. A Hottentot hangs her sheepskin *carross* on her shoulders with more effect,— and it is from what I see every day of my life that I come to this conclusion.

I was the other day at a large shop at the west end of the town, where, if anywhere, we may expect to meet with favourable specimens of our country-women. Not a bit of it. There were a couple of French ladies there dressed smartly and tidily, one in blue and the other in rose-coloured silk, with snug little *scatty* bonnets guiltless of tawdry ribbons or dingy plumes; and great was their astonishment at beholding the nondescript figures which ever and anon passed by. First came gliding out of her carriage, with a languishing air, a young Miss all ringlets down to the knees—feathers drooping on one side of her bonnet, flowers on the other, and an immense Brussels veil (or some such trash) hanging behind; her gown pinned to her back like rags on a Guy Fawkes; a large warming-pan of a watch, secured round her neck by as many chains, gold, silver, and pinchbeck, as an Italian brigand;—with divers other articles, as handkerchiefs, boas, &c., which however costly and beautiful individually, formed altogether an unbecoming and cook-maidish whole. Then came

the two old ladies—but I give *them* up, as too far gone in their evil ways of dressing to hope for amelioration. *Ditto* for the widows in their hideous black bonnets, with a foot and a half of black crape tacked to each side like wings to a paper kite—the horned caps of Edward the Confessor are nothing to them. The French damsels alluded to above, eyed one or two of these *machines* (they can go by no other name) with considerable attention, as if doubting the sanity of the wearer.

“One would not, sure, be frightful when one’s dead,”

says Pope’s Narcissa. I might address a similar question to English widows—

“One would not, sure, be frightful when one *mourns*.”

I looked from one end to the other of the crowded shop, in hopes of finding some happy lady to retrieve the honour of her country—but in vain. All wore the same ugly garment more akin to a night-shift than a gown; the same warming-pan watch and chains; the same fly-flapping bonnet with bunches of ugly ribands. Altogether they formed an awkward contrast to the “tight, reg’lar-built French craft,” as Mathews’s Tom Piper calls them. This time, however, it was the English who were “rigged so rum.”

And then their walk! Oh *quondam* Indicator! *quondam* Tatler! *quondam* and present lover of all that is good and graceful! could you not “in-

dicate" to our English ladies the way to walk? In what absurd book was it that I read the other day that French women walk ill, because, from the want of *trottoirs* in France, they get a habit of "picking" with one foot, which gave a jerking air to the gait. The aristocratic noodle! whose female relations shuffle about on smooth pavements, till they forget how to walk at all! I would not have them cross my grass-plat for the world. They would decapitate the very daisies. How infinitely superior is the Frenchwoman's brisk, springy step (albeit caused by a most plebeian and un-English want of causeways), to the languid sauntering gait of most English dames! Nature teaches the one—the drill-sergeant can do nothing with the other. I wonder how they walked in the days of Charles II. Surely Nell Gwynne and my Lady Castlemaine walked well—and if they did, they walked differently from what they do *now*.

I hope that some good creature like the London Journalist, who believes in the *improvability* of all things, will take up this subject. A word from *him* would set English ladies upon trying, at least, to improve both in dressing and walking. There are models enough—look at the French, the Spanish, the Italians. They have not better opportunities for dressing well than we, and yet they beat us hollow. Why can't we have a *basquina* or *mantilla*, as well as any one else? Let us endeavour.

Above all, let no one suppose that the writer

of these desultory remarks is in the least deficient in love and duty to his fair countrywomen. If he offends any of them, they must imagine that it has been caused by excess of zeal for their interests. Bless their bonnie faces! if we could screw English heads on French figures, what women there would be—surely!

AN OLD CRONY.

July 7th, 1834.

To enter properly into this subject, however trifling it may appear (as indeed is the case with almost every subject so called), would be to open a wide field of investigation into morals, laws, climates, &c. Perhaps climate alone, by reason of the variety of habits it generates in consequence of its various heats, colds, and other influences, will ever prevent an entire similarity of manners, whatever may be the approximation of opinion; but taking for granted, as is not unreasonable, that the progress of knowledge and intercourse will not be without its effect in bringing the customs of civilised countries nearer to one another, and that each will be for availing itself of what is best and pleasantest amongst its neighbours, it becomes worth anybody's while to consider, in what respect it is advisable or otherwise to modify the behaviour or manners accordingly. We can say little, from personal experience, how the case may be in the present instance with regard to French manners. We have a great opinion of Mrs Gore, both as a

general observer, and one that particularly understands what is charming in her own sex. On the other hand, from books, and from a readiness to be pleased with those who wish to please, and even from merely having passed through France in our way from another country, we have got a strong impression that the "hundredth" Frenchwoman, as well as the hundredth Englishwoman, nay, the hundredth Italian, that is to say, the one that carries the requisite graces, the *beau idéal*, of any country to its height, is likely to be so charming a person, in dress and everything else, to her own countrymen, that what Mrs Gore says of the perfectly dressing Englishwoman, is precisely the same thing that would be said of the perfectly dressing Frenchwoman by the French, and of her Italian counterpart by the Italians. It is impossible, unless we are half-foreigners, or unless our own nation is altogether of an inferior grade (and then perhaps our prejudices and irritation would render it equally so) to get rid of some one point of national preference in forming judgments of this kind. Our friend the old Crony, we see, for all his connoisseurship and crony-ism, his regard for a certain piquancy of perfection in the French dress and walk, and his wish that his fair countrywomen would "take steps" after their fashion, cannot get rid of the preference in which he was brought up for the beauty of the English countenance. We have a similar feeling in favour

even of a certain subjected manner, a bending gentleness, (how shall we term it?) in the bearing of the sweetest of our countrywomen, not exactly connected with decision of step, nor perhaps with variety of harmony: for all pleasures run into one another, if they are of a right sort and the ground of them true. Look at the paintings of the French, and you will find, in like manner, that their ideal of a face, let them try to universalise it as they can, is a French one; and so it is with the Spanish and Italian paintings, and with the Greek statues. The merry African girls shriek with horror when they first look upon a white traveller. Their notion of a beautiful complexion is a skin shining like Warren's blacking.

It is proper to understand, in any question, great or small, the premises from which we set out, the point which is required. In the dress and walk of females, as in all other matters in which they are concerned, the point of perfection, we conceive, is that which will give us the best possible idea of perfect *womanhood*. We are not to consider the dress by itself, nor the walk by itself, but as the dress and the walk of the best and pleasantest woman, and how far therefore it does her justice. This produces the consideration of what we look upon as a perfect female; people will vary in their opinions on this head; and hence even so easy a looking question as the one before us, becomes invested with difficulties. The opinion will

depend greatly on the temperament as well as the understanding of the judge. Our correspondent, for instance, is evidently a lively fellow, old or young, and given a good deal rather to the material than to the spiritual; and hence his notion of perfection tends towards a union of the trim and the lively, the impulsive, and yet withal to the self-possessed. He is one, we conceive, who would "have no nonsense," as the phrase is, in his opinion of the possible or desirable; and who is in no danger of the perils, either of sentimentality or sentiment; either of an affected refinement of feeling or any very serious demand of any sort. He is not for bringing into the walks of publicity, male or female, the notions of sequestered imaginations, nor to have women glancing and bashful like fawns. He is for having all things tight and convenient as a dressing-case; "neat as imported"; polished, piquant, well packed, and with no more flowers upon it than serve to give a hint of the smart pungency within, like a bottle of attar of roses, or *fleur-d'épine*. We do not quarrel with him. *Chacun a son gout.* Every man to his taste. Nay, his taste is our own, as far as concerns the improvement of female manners in ordinary. We do not think that the general style of female English dressing and walking would be benefited by an inoculation of that which we conceive him to recommend. We have no predilection in favour of shuffling, and shouldering, and lounging, of a mere

moving onwards of the feet, and an absence of all grace and self-possession. We can easily believe, that the French women surpass the English in this respect, because their climate is livelier, and themselves better taught and respected. People may start at that last word, but there is no doubt that the general run of French females are better taught, and therefore more respected, than the same number of English. They read more, they converse more, they are on more equal terms with the other sex (as they ought to be), and hence the other sex have more value for their opinions, ay, and for their persons; for the more sensible a woman is, supposing her not be masculine, the more attractive she is, in her proportionate power to entertain. But whether it is that we are English, or fonder of poetry in its higher sense than of *vers de société* or the poetry of polite life, we cannot help feeling a prejudice in favour of Mrs Gore's notion about the "hundredth" Englishwoman; though perhaps the "hundredth" Frenchwoman, if we could see her, or the hundredth Italian or Spanish woman, would surpass all others, by dint of combining the sort of *private* manner which we have in our eye, with some exquisite implication of a fitness for general intercourse, which we have never yet met with.

Meantime, we repeat, that we give up to our correspondent's vituperations the gait of English females in general, and their dress also; though it is a little hard in him to praise the smallness of the

French bonnet at the expense of the largeness of the English, when it is recollected that the latter are copied from France, and that our fair country-women were ridiculed on their first visit there after the war, for the very reverse appearance. But it is to the spirit of our mode of dressing and walking that we object; and both are unfit either for the private or public "walk" of life, because both are alike untaught and unpleasing,—alike indicative of minds not properly cultivated, and of habitual feelings that do not care to be agreeable. The walk is a saunter or shuffle, and the dress a lump. Or if not a lump throughout, it is a lump at both ends, with a horrible pinch in the middle. A tight-laced Englishwoman is thus, from head to foot, a most painful sight; her best notion of being charming is confined to three inches of ill-used ribs and liver; while her head is either grossly ignorant of the harm she is doing herself, or her heart more deplorably careless of the consequences to her offspring.

Are we of opinion then, that the dress and walk of Englishwomen would be bettered, generally speaking, by taking the advice of our correspondent? Most certainly we are; and for this reason; that there is *some* sense of grace, at all events, in the attire and bearing of the females of the Continent; some evidence of mind, and some testimony to the proper claims of the person; whereas, the only idea in the heads of the majority with us is that of

being in fashion merely because it *is* the fashion, or of dressing in a manner to show how much they can *afford*. This is partly owing, no doubt, to our being a commercial people, and also to the struggles which everybody has been making for the last forty years to seem richer than they are, some for the sake of concealing how they have decreased in means, and others to show how they have risen; but a nation may be commercial, and yet have a true taste. The Florentines had it, when they were at once the leaders of trade and of the fine arts, in the time of Lorenzo de Medici. It is to our fine arts and our increasing knowledge that we ourselves must look to improvement even in dress, in default of being impelled to it by greater liveliness of spirit, or a more convenient climate. We shall then learn to oppose even the climate better, and to furnish it with the grace and colour which it wants. In France, the better temperature of the atmosphere, as well as intellectual and moral causes, impels people to a livelier and happier way of walking. They have no reason to look as if they were uncomfortable. In the south of Europe, where everything respires animal sensibility, and love and music divide the time with business, the most unaffected people acquire an apparent consciousness and spring in the gait, which in England would be thought ostentatious. It gave no such idea to the severe and simple Dante, when (in the poetical spirit of the image, and not of course

in the letter,) he praised his mistress for moving along like "a peacock," and a "crane."

Soave a guisa va di un bel pavone,
Diritta sopra se come una grue.

Sweetly she goes, like the bright peacock ; strait
Above herself, like to the lady crane.

Petrarch, speaking of Laura, does not venture upon these primeval images; but still he shows how much he thought of the beauty of a woman's steps! Laura too was a Frenchwoman, not an Italian, and probably had a different kind of walk. Petrarch expresses the moral graces of it.

Non erā l'andar suo cosa mortale,
Ma d'angelica forma.

Her walk was like no mortal thing, but shaped
After an angel's.

In English poetry the lover speaks with the usual enthusiasm of his mistress's eyes and lips, etc., but he scarcely ever mentions her walk. The fact is remarkable, and the reason too obvious. The walk is not worth mention. Italian and (we believe) Spanish poetry abound with the reverse. Milton, deeply imbued with the Italian, as well as with his own perceptions of beauty as a great poet, did not forget, in his description of Eve, to say that

*"Grace was in all her steps, Heaven in her eye,
In every gesture dignity and love."*

This moving and gesticulating beauty was not English; at least she is not the Englishwoman of our days. Mrs Hutchinson perhaps might have been such a woman; or the ladies of the Bridgewater family, for whom he wrote his *Comus*. In Virgil, Æneas is not aware that his mother Venus has been speaking with him in the guise of a wood-nymph, till she begins to move away: the "divinity" then became apparent.

"Et vera incessu patuit dea,"

"And by her walk the Queen of Love is known."

DRYDEN.

The women of Spain and Spanish America are celebrated throughout the world for the elegance of their walking, and for the way in which they carry their veil or *mantilla*, as alluded to by our correspondent. Knowing it only from books, we cannot say precisely in what the beauty of their walk consists; but we take it to be something between stateliness and vivacity—between a consciousness of being admired, and that grace which is natural to any human being who is well made, till art or diffidence spoils it. It is the perfection, we doubt not, of animal elegance. We have an English doubt, whether we should not require an addition or modification of something, not indeed diffident, but perhaps not quite so confident,—something which to the perfection of animal elegance, should add that of intellectual and moral refinement, and a

security from the chances of coarseness and violence. But *all* these are matters of breeding and bringing up,—ay, of “birth, parentage, and education,” and we should be grateful when we can get any one of them. Better have even a good walk than nothing, for there is some refinement in it, and moral refinement too, though we may not always think the epithet very applicable to the possessor. Good walking and good dressing, truly so called, are alike valuable, only inasmuch as they afford some external evidence, however slight, of a disposition to orderliness and harmony in the mind within,—of shapeliness and grace in the habitual movements of the soul.

POETS' HOUSES

A PAPER in Mr Disraeli's "Curiosities of Literature" upon "Literary Residences," is very amusing and curious; but it begins with a mistake in saying that "men of genius have usually been condemned to compose their finest works, which are usually their earliest ones, under the roof of a garret;" and the author seems to think, that few have realised the sort of house they wished to live in. The combination of "genius and a garret" is an old joke, but little more. Genius has been often poor enough, but seldom so much so as to want what are looked upon as the decencies of life. In point of abode, in particular, we take it to have been generally lucky as to the fact, and not at all so grand in the desire as Mr Disraeli seems to imagine. Ariosto, who raised such fine structures in his poetry, was asked indeed how he came to have no greater one when he built a house for himself; and he answered, that "palaces are easier built with words than stones." It was a pleasant answer, and fit for the interrogator; but Ariosto valued himself much upon the snug little abode which he did build, as may be seen by the inscription still

remaining upon it at Ferrara; and we will venture to say for the cordial, tranquillity-loving poet, that he would rather live in such a house as that, and amuse himself with building palaces in his poetry, than have undergone the fatigue, and drawn upon himself the publicity, of erecting a princely mansion, full of gold and marble. No mansion which he could have built would have equalled what he could fancy; and poets love nests from which they can take their flights—not worlds of wood and stone to strut in, and give them ~~the~~ sensation. If so, they would have set their wits to get rich, and live accordingly; which none of them ever did yet,—at any rate, not the greatest. Ariosto notoriously neglected his “fortunes”—in that sense of the word. Shakspeare had the felicity of building a house for himself, and settling in his native town; but though the best *in* it, it was nothing equal to the “seats” outside of it (where the richer men of the district lived); and it appears to have been a “modest mansion,” not bigger, for instance, than a good-sized house in Red Lion Street, or some other old quarter in the metropolis. Suppose he had set *his* great wits to rise in the state and accumulate money, like Lionel Cranfield, for example, or Thomas Cromwell, the blacksmith’s son. We know that any man who chooses to begin systematically with a penny, under circumstances at all favourable, may end with thousands. Suppose Shakspeare had done it

he might have built a house like a mountain. But did not,—it will be said,—because he was a poet and poets are not getters of money. Well; and for the same reason, poets do not care for the mightier things which money can get. It cannot get the health, and freedom, and a life in the green fields and mansions in fairy-land; and they prefer those modest visible lodgings.

Chaucer had a great large house to live in, a castle,—because he was connected with royal persons; but he does not delight to talk of such places: he is all for the garden, and the daisied fields, and the bower like a “pretty parlour.” His mind was too big for a great house; which challenges measurement with its inmates, and is generally equal to them. He felt elbow-room, and heart-room, or he was out in God’s air, or in the heart itself, or in the bowers built by Nature, and reminding him of the greatness of her love.

Spenser lived at one time in a castle,—in Ireland, —a piece of forfeited property, given him for political services; and he lived to repent it: he was burnt in civil warfare, and his poor castle burnt with it; and the poet was driven back to England, broken-hearted. But look at the houses he describes in his poems,—even he who was born in a court, and loved pomp, after his fashion. Nature bestows the great ones upon princes and allegorical personages, who live in state and have many servants, (for the largest houses, after all, are)

collections of small ones, and of unfitting neighbourhoods too); but his nests, his poetic bowers, his *deliciae* and *amoenitates*, he keeps for his hermits and his favourite nymphs, and his flowers of courtesy; and observe how he delights to repeat the word "little," when describing them. His travellers come to "little valleys," in which, through the tree-tops, comes reeking up a "little smoke," (a "chearefull signe," quoth the poet,) and

"To little cots in which the shepherds lie;"

and though all his little cots are not happy, yet he is ever happiest when describing them, should they be so, and showing in what sort of contentment his mind delighted finally to rest.

"A little lowly heritage it was
 Down in a dale, hard by a forest's side,
 Far from resort of people, that did pass
 In travel to and fro. A little wide
 There was an holy chappell edifyde,
 Wherein the hermit dewly wont to say
 His holy things each morn and eventide;
 Thereby a crystall streme did gently play,
 Which from a sacred fountain wellèd forth alway.

Arrived there, the *little* house they fill,
 Nor look for entertainment where none was;
 Rest is their feast, and all things at their will;
The noblest mind the best contentment has."

Milton, who built the Pandemonium, and filled it with

"A thousand demi-gods on golden seats,"

was content if he could but get a "garden-house" to live in, as it was called in his time; that is to say, a small house in the suburbs, with a bit of garden to it. He required nothing but a tree or two about him, to give him "airs of Paradise." His biographer shows us, that he made a point of having a residence of this kind. He lived as near as he could to the wood-side and the fields, like his fellow-patriot, M. Beranger, who would have been the Andrew Marvell of those times, and adorned his great friend as the other did, or like his Mirth (*l'Allegro*) visiting his Melancholy.

And hear beloved Cowley, quiet and pleasant as the sound in his trees:—"I never had any other desire so strong, and so like to covetousness, as that one which I have had always,—that I might be master at last of a *small* house and *large* garden, with very moderate conveniences joined to them, and there dedicate the remainder of my life only to the culture of them, and study of nature; and there, with no design beyond my wall,

‘whole and entire to lie,
In no unactive ease, and no unglorious poverty.’”
The Garden.

"I confess," says he, in another essay (on Greatness), "I love littleness almost in all things,—a little convenient estate, a little cheerful house, a little company, and a very little feast; and if ever I were to fall in love again (which is a great passion,

and therefore I hope I have done with it), it would be, I think, with prettiness, rather than with majestic beauty."

(What charming writing!—how charming *as* writing, as well as thinking! and charming in both respects, because it possesses the only real perfection of either,—truth of feeling).

Cowley, to be sure, got such a house as he wanted "at last," and was not so happy in it as he expected to be; but then it was because he did only get it "*at last,*" when he was growing old, and was in bad health. Neither might he have ever been so happy in such a place as he supposed (blest are the poets, surely, in enjoying happiness even in imagination!) yet he would have been less comfortable in a house less to his taste.

Dryden lived in a house in Gerard Street (then almost a suburb), looking, at the back, into the gardens of Leicester House, the mansion of the Sydneys. Pope had a nest at Twickenham, much smaller than the fine house since built upon the site; and Thomson another at Richmond, consisting only of the ground-floor of the present house. Everybody knows what a rural house Cowper lived in. Shenstone's was but a farm adorned, and his bad health unfortunately hindered *him* from enjoying it. He married a house and grounds, poor man! instead of a wife; which was being very "one-sided" in his poetry—and he found them more expensive than Miss Dolman would have

and got a few domestic cares of a handsome sort, to keep him alive and moving. Most of the living poets are dwellers in cottages, except Mr Rogers, who is rich, and has a mansion, looking on one of the parks; but there it *does* look—upon grass and trees. He will have as much nature with his art as he can get. Next to a cottage of the most comfortable order, we should prefer, for our parts, if we must have servants and a household, one of those good old mansions of the Tudor age, or some such place, which looks like a sort of cottage-palace, and is full of old corners, old seats in the windows, and old memories. The servants, in such a case, would probably have grown old in one's family, and become friends; and this makes a great difference in the possible comfort of a great house. It gives it old family warmth.

ON RECEIVING A SPRIG OF LAUREL FROM VAUCLUSE

AND this piece of laurel is from Vaucluse! Perhaps Petrarch, perhaps Laura sat under it! This is a true present. What an exquisite, dry, old, vital, young-looking, everlasting twig it is! It has been plucked nine months, and yet looks as hale and as crisp as if it would last ninety years. It shall last, at any rate, as long as its owner, and longer, if care and love can preserve it. How beautifully it is turned! It was a happy pull from the tree. Its shape is the very line of beauty; it has berries upon it, as if resolved to show us in what fine condition the trees are; while the leaves issue from it, and swerve upwards with their elegant points, as though they had come from adorning the poet's head. Be thou among the best of one's keepsakes, thou gentle stem, *in deliciis nostris*; and may the very maid-servant, who wonders to see thy withered beauty in its fame, miss her lover the next five weeks, for not having the instinct to know that thou must have something to do with love!

Perhaps Petrarch has felt the old ancestral

boughs of this branch stretching over his head, and whispering to him of the name of Laura, of his love, and of their future glory; for all these ideas used to be entwined in one. (*Sestina 2, canzone 17, sonetti 162, 163, 164, 207, 224, &c.*) Perhaps it is of the very stock of that bough, which he describes as supplying his mistress with a leaning-stock, when she sat in her favourite bower.

Giovane donna sotto un verde lauro
 Vidi più bianca e più fredda che neve
 Non percossa dal sol molti e molt' anni;
 E 'l suo parlar, e 'l bel viso, e le chiome,
 Mi piacquer sì, ch' i' l'ho a gli occhi miei,
 Ed avro sempre, ov' io sia in poggio o'n riva.

Part i. sestina 2.

A youthful lady under a green laurel
 I saw, more fair and colder than white snows
 Veil'd from the sun for many and many a year:
 And her sweet face, and hair, and way of speaking,
 So pleased me, that I have her now before me,
 And shall have ever, whether on hill or lea.

The laurel seems more appropriate to Petrarch than to any other poet. He delighted to sit under its leaves; he loved it both for itself and for the resemblance of its name to that of his mistress; he wrote of it continually, and he was called from out of its shade to be crowned with it in the Capitol. It is a remarkable instance of the fondness with which he cherished the united idea of Laura and

On Receiving a Sprig of Laurel 133

the laurel, that he confesses this fancy to have been one of the greatest delights he experienced in receiving the crown upon his head.

It was out of Vaucluse that he was called. Vaucluse, Valchiusa, the Shut Valley (from which the French, in the modern enthusiasm for intellect, gave the name to the department in which it lies), is a remarkable spot in the old poetical region of Provence, consisting of a little deep glen of green meadows, surrounded with rocks, and containing the fountain of the river Sorgue. Petrarch, when a boy of eight or nine years of age, had been struck with its beauty, and exclaimed that it was the place of all others he should like to live in, better than the most splendid cities. He resided there afterwards for several years, and composed in it the greater part of his poems. Indeed, he says in his account of himself, that he either wrote or conceived, in that valley, almost every work he produced. He lived in a little cottage, with a small homestead, on the banks of the river. Here he thought to forget his passion for Laura, and here he found it stronger than ever. We do not well see how it could have been otherwise; for Laura lived no great way off, at Chabrieres, and he appears to have seen her often in the very place. He paced along the river; he sat under the trees; he climbed the mountains; but Love, he says, was ever by his side,

Ragionando con meco, ed io con lui.

He holding talk with me, and I with him.

We are supposing that all our readers are acquainted with Petrarch. Many of them doubtless know him intimately.¹ Should any of them want an introduction to him, how should we speak of him in the gross? We should say, that he was one of the finest gentlemen and greatest scholars that ever lived; that he was a writer who flourished in Italy in the fourteenth century, at the time when Chaucer was young, during the reigns of our Edwards; that he was the greatest light of his age; that although so fine a writer himself, and the author of a multitude of works, or rather because he was both, he took the greatest pains to revive the knowledge of the ancient learning, recommending it everywhere, and copying out large manuscripts with his own hand; that two great cities, Paris and Rome, contended which should have the honour of crowning him; that he was crowned publicly, in the Metropolis of the World, with laurel and with myrtle; that he was the friend of Boccaccio, the Father of Italian Prose; and lastly, that his greatest renown nevertheless, as well as the predominant feelings of his existence, arose from the long love he bore for a lady of Avignon, the far-famed Laura, whom he fell in love with on the 6th of April 1327, on a Good Friday; whom he rendered illustrious in a multitude of sonnets, which have left a sweet sound and sentiment in the ear of all after lovers; and who died, still passionately beloved, in the year 1348, on the same

day and hour on which he first beheld her. Who she was, or why their connexion was not closer, remains a mystery. But that she was a real person, and that in spite of her staid manners she did not show an altogether insensible countenance to his passion, is clear from his long-haunted imagination, from his own repeated accounts—from all that he wrote, uttered, and thought. One love, and one poet, sufficed to give the whole civilised world a sense of delicacy in desire, of the abundant riches to be found in one single idea, and of the going out of a man's self to dwell in the soul and happiness of another, which has served to refine the passion for all modern times; and perhaps will do so, as long as love renews the world.

RHYME AND REASON

OR A NEW PROPOSAL TO THE PUBLIC RESPECT- ING POETRY IN ORDINARY

A FRIEND of ours the other day, taking up the miscellaneous poems of Tasso, read the title-page into English as follows:—"The Rhymes of the Lord Twisted Yew, Amorous, Bosky, and Maritime."¹ The Italians exhibit a modesty worthy of imitation in calling their Miscellaneous Poems, Rhymes. Twisted Yew himself, with all his genius, has put forth an abundance of these terminating blossoms, without any fruit behind them: and his countrymen of the present day do not scruple to confess, that their living poetry consists of little else. The French have a game of verses, called Rhymed Ends (*Bouts Rimés*), which they practise a great deal more than they are aware; and the English, though they are a more poetical people, and lay claim to the character of a less *one*, practise the same game to a very uncouth extent, without so much as allowing that the *is applicable to any part of it.*

¹ Rime del Signor Torquato Tasso, Amoroze, Bosch Marittime, &c.

Yet how many "Poems" are there among all these nations, of which we require no more than the Rhymes, to be acquainted with the whole of them? You know what the rogues have done, by the ends they come to. For instance, what more is necessary to inform us of all which the following gentleman has for sale, than the bell which he tinkles at the end of his cry? We are as sure of him, as of the muffin man.

A LOVE SONG

Grove,	Heart.	Kiss
Night,	Prove,	Blest
Rove,	Impart,	Bliss
Delight.	Love.	Rest.

Was there ever peroration more eloquent? Ever a series of catastrophes more explanatory of their previous history? Did any Chinese gentleman ever show the amount of his breeding and accomplishments more completely, by the nails which he carries at his fingers' ends?

The Italian Rimatori are equally comprehensive. We no sooner see the majority of their rhymes, than we long to save the modesty of their general pretensions so much trouble in making out their case. Their *cores* and *amores* are not to be disputed. Cursed is he that does not put implicit reliance upon their *fedelta!* — that makes inquisition why the possessor *più superbo va*. They

may take the oaths and their seat at once.
example—

Ben mio	Fuggito
Oh Dio	Repito
Per te.	Da me.

And again—

Amata
Sdegnata
Turbata
Irata
Furore
Dolore
Non so.

With—

O cielo
Dal gielo
Tradire
Languire
Morire
Soffrire
Non può.

Where is the dull and inordinate persons that would require these rhymes to be filled up? If they are brief as the love of which they complain, are they not pregnant in conclusions, full of a world of things that have passed, infinitely retrospective, embracing, and enough? If not "vast," are they not "voluminous?"

It is doubtless an instinct of this kind that has made so many modern Italian poets intersperse their lyrics with those frequent single words, which are at once line and rhyme, and which some of our

countrymen have in vain endeavoured to naturalise in the English opera. Not that they want the same pregnancy in our language, but because they are neither so abundant nor so musical; and besides, there is something in the rest of our verses, however common-place, which seems to be laughing at the incursion of these vivacious strangers, as if it were a hop suddenly got up, and unseasonably. We do not naturally take to anything so abrupt and saltatory.

This objection, however, does not apply to the proposal we are about to make. Our rhymers *must* rhyme; and as there is a great difference between single words thus mingled with longer verses, and the same rhymes in their proper places, it has struck us, that a world of time and paper might be saved to the ingenious *rimatore*, whether Italian or English, by foregoing at once all the superfluous part of his verses; that is to say, all the rest of them; and confining himself, entirely, to these very sufficing terminations. We subjoin some specimens in the various kinds of poetry; and inform the intelligent bookseller, that we are willing to treat with him for any quantity at a penny a hundred.

A PASTORAL.

Dawn	Each	Fair	Me	Ray
Plains	Spoke	Mine	Too	Heat
Lawn	Beech	Hair	Free	Play
Swains.	Yoke.	Divine.	Woo.	Sweet.

Tune	Fields	Shades	Adieu	Farewell.
Lays	Bowers	Darts	Flocks	Cows
Moon	Yields	Maids	Renew	Dell
Gaze.	Flowers.	Hearts.	Rocks.	Boughs.

Here, without any more ado, we have the whole history of a couple of successful rural lovers comparing notes. They issue forth in the morning; fall into the proper place and dialogue; record the charms and kindness of their respective mistresses; do justice at the same time to the fields and shades; and conclude by telling their flocks to wait as usual while they renew their addresses under the boughs. How easily is all this gathered from the rhymes! and how worse than useless would it be in two persons, who have such interesting avocations, to waste their precious time and the reader's in a heap of prefatory remarks, falsely called verses!

Of Love-songs we have already had specimens; and, by-the-bye, we did not think it necessary to give any French examples of our involuntary predecessors in this species of writing. The *yeux* and *dangereux*, *moi* and *toi*, *charmes* and *larmes*, are too well-known as well as too numerous to mention. We proceed to lay before the reader a Prologue; which, if spoken by a pretty actress, with a due sprinkling of nods and becks, and a judicious management of the pauses, would have an effect equally novel and triumphant. The reader is aware that a Prologue is generally made up of some

observations on the drama in general, followed by an appeal in favour of the new one, some compliments to the nation, and a regular climax in honour of the persons appealed to. We scarcely need observe, that the rhymes should be read slowly, in order to give effect to the truly understood remarks in the intervals.

PROLOGUE.

Age	Fashion	Applause
Stage	British Nation.	Virtue's Cause
Mind		Trust
Mankind	Young	Just
Face	Tongue	Fear
Trace	Bard	Here
Sigh	Reward	Stands
Tragedy	Hiss	Hands
Scene	Miss	True
Spleen	Dare	You.
Pit	British Fair	
Wit		

Here we have some respectable observations on the advantages of the drama in every age, on the wideness of its survey, the different natures of tragedy and comedy, the vicissitudes of fashion, and the permanent greatness of the British empire. Then the young bard, new to the dramatic art, is introduced. He disclaims all hope of reward for any merit of his own, except that which is founded on a proper sense of the delicacy and beauty of fair auditors, and his zeal in the cause of virt

To this, at all events, he is sure his critics will be just; and though he cannot help feeling a certain timidity, standing where he does, yet upon the whole, as becomes an Englishman, he is perfectly willing to abide by the decision of his countrymen's hands, hoping that he shall be found

“. . . to sense, if not to genius true,
And trusts his cause to virtue, and—to You.”

Should the reader, before he comes to this explication of the Prologue, have had any other ideas suggested by it, we will undertake to say, that they will at all events be found to have a wonderful general similitude; and it is to be observed, that this very flexibility of adaptation is one of the happiest and most useful results of our proposed system of poetry. It comprehends all the possible common-places in vogue; and it also leaves to the ingenious reader something to fill up; which is a compliment that has always been held due to him by the best authorities.

The next specimen is what, in a more superfluous condition of metre, would have been entitled *Lines* on Time. It is much in that genteel didactic taste, which is at once thinking and non-thinking, and has a certain neat and elderly dislike of innovation in it, greatly to the comfort of the seniors who adorn the circles.

ON TIME.

Time	Child	Race	Hold
Sublime	Beguiled	Trace	Old
Fraught	Boy	All	Sure
Thought	Joy	Ball	Endure
Power	Man	Pride	Death
Devour	Span	Deride	Breath
Rust	Sire	Aim	Forgiven
Dust	Expire	Same	Heaven.
Glass		Undo	
Pass	So	New	
Wings	Go		
Kings			

We ask any impartial reader, whether he could possibly want a more sufficing account of the progress of this author's piece of reasoning upon Time? There is, first, the address to the hoary god, with all his emblems and consequence about him, the scythe excepted; that being an edge-tool to rhymers, which they judiciously keep inside the verse, as in a sheath. And then we are carried through all the stages of human existence, the caducity of which the writer applies to the world at large, impressing upon us the inutility of hope and exertion, and suggesting of course the propriety of thinking just as he does upon all subjects, political and moral, past, present, and to come.

health, the great secret of enjoyment; and, accordingly, as we lessen our cares and increase our pleasures, we may imagine ourselves affording a grateful spectacle to the Author of happiness. Error and misery, taken in their proportion, are the exceptions in his system. The world is most unquestionably happier upon the whole than otherwise; or light and air, and the face of nature, would be different from what they are, and mankind no longer be buoyed up in perpetual hope and action. By cultivating agreeable thoughts, then, we tend, like bodies in philosophy, to the greater mass of sensations, rather than the less.

What we can enjoy, let us enjoy like creatures made for that very purpose: what we cannot, let us, in the same character, do our best to deprive of its bitterness. Nothing can be more idle than the voluntary gloom with which people think to please Heaven in certain matters, and which they confound with serious acknowledgment, or what they call a due sense of its dispensations. It is nothing but the cultivation of the principle of fear, instead

of confidence, with whatever name they may disguise it. It is carrying frightened faces to court, instead of glad and grateful ones; and is above all measure ridiculous, because the real cause of it, and, by the way, of a thousand other feelings which religious courtiers mistake for religion, cannot be concealed from the Being it is intended to honour. There is a dignity certainly in suffering well, where we cannot choose but suffer;—if we must take physic, let us do it like men;—but what would be his dignity, who, when he had the choice in his power, should make the physic bitterer than it is, or even to refuse to render it more palatable, purely to look grave over it, and do honour to the physician?

The idea of our dissolution is one of those which we most abuse in this manner, principally, no doubt, because it is abhorrent from the strong principle of vitality implanted in us, and the habits that have grown up with it. But what then? So much the more should we divest it of all the unpleasant associations which it need not excite, and add to it all the pleasant ones which it will allow.

But what is the course we pursue? We remember having a strong impression, years ago, of the absurdity of our mode of treating a death-bed, and of the great desirableness of having it considered as nothing but a sick one, one to be smoothed and comforted, even by cordial helps, if necessary. We remember also how some persons, who, never-

theless, did too much justice to the very freest of our speculations to consider them as profane, were startled by this opinion, till we found it expressed, in almost so many words, by no less an authority than Lord Bacon. We got at our notion through a very different process, no doubt,—he through the depth of his knowledge, and we from the very buoyancy of our youth;—but we are not disposed to think it the less wise on that account. “The serious,” of course, are bound to be shocked at so cheering a proposition; but of them we have already spoken. The great objection would be, that such a system would deprive the evil-disposed of one terror in prospect, and that this principle of determent is already found too feeble to afford any diminution. The fact is, the whole principle is worth little or nothing, unless the penalty to be inflicted is pretty certain, and appeals also to the less sentimental part of our nature. It is good habits,—a well-educated conscience,—a little early knowledge,—the cultivation of generous motives,—must supply people with preventives of bad conduct; their sense of things is too immediate and lively to attend, in the long run, to anything else. We will be bound to say, generally speaking, that the prospective terrors of a death-bed never influenced any others than nervous consciences, too weak, and inhabiting organizations too delicate, to afford to be very bad ones. But, in the mean time, they may be very alarming to such consciences in

prospect, and very painful to the best and most temperate of mankind in actual sufferance; and why should this be, but, as we have said before, to keep bitter that which we could sweeten, and to persist in a mistaken want of relief, under a notion of its being a due sense of our condition? We know well enough what a due sense of our condition is in other cases of infirmity; and what is a death-bed but the very acme of infirmity,—the sickness, bodily and mental, that of all others has most need of relief?

If the death happens to be an easy one, the case is altered; and no doubt it is oftener so than people imagine;—but how much pains are often taken to render it difficult!—First, the chamber, in which the dying person lies, is made as gloomy as possible with curtains, and vials, and nurses, and terrible whispers, and, perhaps, the continual application of handkerchiefs to weeping eyes;—then, whether he wishes it or not, or is fit to receive it or not, he is to have the whole truth told him by some busy-body who never was so anxious, perhaps, in the cause of veracity before;—and lastly, come partings, and family assemblies, and confusion of the head with matters of faith, and trembling prayers, that tend to force upon dying weakness the very doubts they undertake to dissipate. Well may the soldier take advantage of such death-beds as these, to boast of the end that awaits him in the field.

But having lost our friend, we must still continue to add to our own misery at the circumstances. We must heap about the recollection of our loss, the most gloomy and distasteful circumstances we can contrive, and thus, perhaps, absolutely involve ourselves to think as little of him as possible. We wrap the body in ghastly habiliments, put it in a tasteless a piece of furniture as we can invent, dress ourselves in the gloomiest of colours, awake to the barbarous monotony of the church-bell (to frighten every sick person in the neighbourhood), call about us a set of officious mechanics, of all sorts, who are counting their shillings, as it were, by the tears that we shed, and watching with jealousy every candle-end of their "perquisites,"—and proceed to consign our friend or relation to the dust, under a ceremony that takes particular pains to impress that ~~one~~ summation on our minds.—Lastly, come tasteless tombstones and ridiculous epitaphs, with perhaps a skull and cross-bones at top; and the tombstones are crowded together, generally in the middle of towns, always near the places of worship, unless the church-yard is overstocked. Scarcely ever is there a tree on the spot;—in some remote villages alone are the graves ever decorated with flowers.¹ All is stony, earthy, and dreary. It seems as if, after having rendered everything before death as painful as possible, we endeavoured to subside into a sullen indifference, which contradicted itself by its own efforts.

¹ Matters have been improving since this article was written.

The Greeks managed these things better. The ancients did not render the idea of death so harshly distinct, as we do, from that of life. They did not extinguish all light and cheerfulness in their minds, and in things about them, as it were, on the instant; neither did they keep before one's eyes, with hypochondriacal pertinacity, the idea of death's heads and skeletons, which, as representations of humanity, are something more absurd than the brick which the pedant carried about as the specimen of his house. They selected pleasant spots for sepulture, and outside the town; they adorned their graves with arches and pillars,—with myrtles, lilies, and roses; they kept up the social and useful idea of their great men by entombing them near the highway, so that every traveller paid his homage as he went; and latterly, they reduced the dead body to ashes,—a clean and inoffensive substance—gathered it into a tasteful urn, and often accompanied it with other vessels of exquisite construction, on which were painted the most cheerful actions of the person departed, even to those of his everyday life,—the prize in the games, the toilet, the recollections of his marriages and friendships—the figures of beautiful females,—everything, in short, which seemed to keep up the idea of a vital principle, and to say, “the creature who so did and so enjoyed itself cannot be all gone.” The image of the vital principle and of an after-life was, in fact, often and distinctly repeated on these

vessels by a variety of emblems, animal vegetable, particularly the image of Psyche, soul, by means of the butterfly,—an association which, in process of time, as other associations gathered about it, gave rise to the most exquisitely allegorical in the world, the story of *Cupid and Psyche*.

Now, we do not mean to say, that everybody thinks as we do upon this subject, should completely depart at once from existing customs, especially chief ones. These things must either go gradually or by some convulsive movement in society, as others have gone; and mere eccentricity is no help to their departure. What we can undo, let us only do as decently as possible; but we might render the dying a great deal more comfortable, by just daring a little to consider their fortresses and not our puerility: we might allow rooms also to be more light and cheerful; we might take pains to bring pleasanter associations into them altogether; and, when they were gone, we might cultivate our own a little better; our stones might at least be in better taste; we might take more care of our graves; we might prevent our sick neighbours from the sound of the death-bell; a single piece of ribbon or crape would be enough to guard us against the unwell inquiries of friends, while, in the rest of our dress, we might adopt, by means of a ring or a very small ribbon, some cheerful instead of gloomy recollection.

of the person we had lost,—a favourite colour, for instance, or device,—and thus contrive to balance a grief which we must feel, and which, indeed, in its proper associations, it would not be desirable to avoid. Rousseau died gazing on the setting sun, and was buried under green trees. Petrarch, who seemed born to complete and render glorious the idea of an author from first to last, was found dead in his study with his head placidly resting on a book. What is there in deaths like these to make us look back with anguish, or to plunge into all sorts of gloominess and bad taste?

We know not whether it has ever struck any of our readers, but we seem to consider the relics of ancient taste, which we possess, as things of mere ornament, and forget that their uses may be in some measure preserved, so as to complete the idea of their beauty, and give them, as it were, a soul again. We place their urns and vases, for instance, about our apartments, but never think of putting anything in them; yet when they are not absolutely too fragile, we might often do so,—fruit, flowers,—toilet utensils,—a hundred things, with a fine opportunity (to boot) of showing our taste in inscriptions. The Chinese, in the *Citizen of the World*, when he was shown the two large vases from his own country, was naturally amused to hear that they only served to fill up the room, and held no supply of tea in them as they did at home. A lady, a friend of ours, who shows in her countenance her origin from a country of taste, and who acts up to

the promise of her countenance, is the only person, but one, whom we ever knew to turn antique ornament to account in this respect. She buried a favourite bird in a vase on her mantel-piece; and there the little rogue lies, with more kind and tasteful associations about him, than the greatest dust in Christendom. The other instance is that of two urns of marble, which have been turned as much as possible to the original purposes of such vessels, by becoming the depository of locks of hair. A lock of hair is an actual relic of the dead, as much so, in its proportion, as ashes, and more lively and recalling than even those. It is the part of us that preserves vitality longest; it is a clean and elegant substance: and it is especially connected with ideas of tenderness, in the cheek or the eyes about which it may have strayed, and the handling we may have given it on the living head. The thoughts connected with such relics time gradually releases from grief itself, and softens into tender enjoyment; and we know that in the instance alluded to the possessor of those two little urns would no more consent to miss them from his study, than he would any other cheerful association that he could procure. It is a consideration, which he would not forego for a great deal, that the venerable and lovely dust to which they belonged lies in a village churchyard and has left the most unfading part of it inclosed in graceful vessels.



